MODERN SCIENTIFIC WHIST

C. D. P. HAMILTON

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MODERN SCIENTIFIC WHIST

THE

PRINCIPLES OF THE MODERN GAME

ANALYSED AND EXTENDED

Illustrated by over Sixty Critical Endings and Annotated Games from Actual Play

BY

C. D. P. HAMILTON

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This Book

Is Fraternally Dedicated

TO

THE WHIST-PLAYER

WHO LOVES AND STUDIES

THE FIRST OF GAMES

PREFACE.

THIS treatise on Whist is based upon the system of leads known as American Leads.

The principle underlying these leads is the invention of N. B. Trist, Esq., of New Orleans, La.; and as now extended and simplified the Whist world is indebted to Mr. Henry Jones, M. R. C. S. ("Cavendish"), of London, England.

The purpose of this volume is to present to the student of the game the rules and maxims of play as laid down by the authorities, and practiced by the strongest players. And an effort has been made to simplify and render clear the applications of the many rules and maxims by copious analyses and numerous illustrations. Much space has been devoted to the play of second hand, the intricacies of end-play, the department of inference and to the management of trumps.

The writer has no inventions to announce, no theories to defend, and is indebted to the literature of the game and to the expert players met in practice for all that appears in the following pages which may prove of value to the Students of Whist.

C. D. P. H.

FEBRUARY, 1894.

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MODERN SCIENTIFIC WHIST.

CHAPTER I.

TECHNICAL TERMS, ABBREVIATIONS, ETC.

BRING IN.—To make the cards of a suit.

CALL.—To ask for trumps; a conventional play requesting partner to lead trumps. *See* "signal."

COMMAND.—The ability to take every trick in a suit no matter by whom led.

CONVENTIONAL.—This term is applicable to any generally recognized order of play. You play "conventionally" when you lead the knave from king, queen, knave and two small.

COUP.—A strategic stroke; a brilliant play resulting in gain.

COURT CARDS.—Ace, king, queen and knave.

COVER.—To play a card higher than the one led.

CROSS-RUFF.—When "A" trumps a suit led by "B" who in turn trumps a suit led by "A." *See* "see-saw."

DEALER.—The one who deals; *i. e.*, distributes the cards to each player.

DESCHAPELLES COUP.—The play of a king or other high card at the head of many, for the purpose of forcing the ace or other high card, to make good a smaller card in partner's hand.

DISCARD.—To play a card of a different plain suit than the one led.

ECHO.—To echo partner's call; *i. e.*, to show by play that you have more than three trumps.

ELDEST HAND.—The player to the left of the dealer.

ESTABLISH.—A suit is established when you have complete control. *See* "command."

EXPOSED CARD.—Every card faced upon the table otherwise than in the regular course of play.

FALL.—The cards that have been played.

FALSE CARD.—An unconventional play for the purpose of deceiving opponents.

FINESSE.—Artifice; stratagem. An endeavor to take a trick with a lower card when a higher is in your hand. When you do not play your best of two or more cards, not in sequence (second or third hand), you finesse; as when holding ace, queen and others, to partner's lead, you play queen.

FOLLOW.—The cards played to the card led. The card led by the leader after a high card, as "A" led ace, and followed with the knave, is referred to as "the lead and *follow*."

FORCE.—Leading a card that an opponent must trump to win, or a losing card that partner must trump to gain the trick.

FOURCHETTE.—The card next higher and next lower than the one led; *i. e.*, holding queen, ten—knave led—you have a fourchette.

FOURTH BEST.—The fourth-best card of a suit, as—queen, 9, 8, 6, 4,—the "6" is the fourth-best card.

FOURTH HAND.—The player to the right of the leader; *i. e.*, the last player upon a trick.

GAME.—Scoring seven points or more.

GRAND COUP.—Throwing away a superfluous trump to avoid the lead. *See* "Critical Endings."

GUARDED.—A high card protected by smaller ones, that the high card may not fall to a higher one.

HAND.—The thirteen cards given to each player by the dealer. The four hands combined are referred to as the *hand* or *deal.*

HIGH CARDS.—Ace, king, queen, knave, 10, 9.

HOLDING UP.—Refusing to take a trick.

HONORS.—Ace, king, queen, knave of trumps.

IN.—The cards that have not been played are said to be "in" or "in play."

IN THE LEAD.—When it is your turn to lead the first card in any round or trick, you are *in the lead.*

LEADER.—The first player.

LEADING THROUGH.—Leading a suit in which the left-hand adversary is strong.

LEADING UP TO.—When the opponent returns a suit making the original leader of the suit last player to the trick, it is termed "leading up to."

LONG.—To be "long" in a suit is to have numerical strength in it.

LONG SUIT.—A suit of more than three cards.

LONG TRUMP.—The last trump in play.

LOSING CARD.—A card that may not take a trick.

LOVE.—No score.

LOVE-ALL.—Synonymous with "*love.*"

LOW CARDS.—All the cards below the 9. Synonymous with "*small cards.*"

MAKE.—You "make" cards when you take tricks with them.

MAKE UP.—The partner of the dealer makes up the pack for the next dealer.

MASTER CARD.—Any card of a suit the best in play.

ODD CARD.—When A B take seven tricks, C D six, A B are said to have the odd card.

ODD TRICK.—Synonymous with "*odd card.*"

OPENING.—You "open" a suit when you are the first to lead a card from the suit. The original leader of the hand is said to open the hand.

OUT.—The cards that have been played are "out" of play.

PARTIE.—A series of games or rubbers contested by the same players is referred to as a *partie.*

PASS.—When you do not make an effort to take a trick, although in your power to do so, you are said to *pass.*

PENULTIMATE.—Now obsolete; superseded by *fourth best.* In a suit of ace, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, the 4 is the *penultimate,* the 5 is the *ante-penultimate.*

PLAIN SUIT.—A suit not trump.

PLAIN SUIT ECHO.—A conventional order for play by third hand to show *exactly* four cards of the suit led by partner and also to unblock, usually termed unblocking. *See* "unblocking" (page 161).

POINTS.—Each trick in excess of six.

QUART.—Four—four cards in sequence.

QUART MAJOR.—Ace, king, queen, knave of any suit.

QUINT.—Five cards in sequence.

QUITTED.—When a player's hand has been withdrawn from a trick, after turning it down on the table, the trick is "quitted."

RE-ENTRY.—Gaining possession of the lead. A card of re-entry is one that will give the holder the lead—usually at an advanced stage of the hand.

RENOUNCING.—Playing a card of a plain suit other than the suit led.

REVOKE.—A renounce in error not corrected in time, that is, playing a card of another plain suit, yet holding one or more of the suit led, or trumping a trick when you can *follow suit*. *See* "The Laws of Whist."

ROUND.—The cards played to the card led; *i. e.*, the cards that compose the trick, hence there are thirteen tricks or rounds in each hand.

RUBBER.—Two out of three games, or two in succession.

RUFFING.—Trumping a plain suit card.

SCORE.—The record of points made upon the game.

SECOND HAND.—The hand to the left of the leader.

SEE-SAW.—Alternate trumping by partners. *See* "Cross-ruff."

SEQUENCE.—Two or more cards in regular order as to rank. Ace, king is a sequence of two cards. Three in sequence is a *tierce;* hence ace, king, queen is a *tierce major;* four, a *quart;* five, a *quint* sequence, etc. A suit of ace, king, queen, 3, 2, contains a *head* sequence; ace, knave, 10, 9, 3, an *intermediate* sequence; ace, 9, 8, 7, an *under* sequence; ace, king, queen, 9, 8, 7, contains a *head* sequence and a *subordinate* sequence.

SHORT SUIT.—One of less than four cards.

SIGNAL.—Synonymous with call; *i. e.*, to play an *unnecessarily* high card followed by a smaller one of the same suit. All conventional plays are signals—they give notice, inform of certain holding, etc.

SINGLE DISCARD CALL.—The discard of an 8 or higher card of a suit not yet in play, is a request for trumps. (But *see* p. 268.)

SINGLETON.—A suit of which you hold originally but one card.

SMALL CARDS.—All the cards below the 9.

STRENGTHENING CARD.—A medium high card led to partner's supposed suit (or one that is proclaimed as his), for the purpose of forcing a higher card—if against—thus making partner's smaller cards of the suit good.

STRONG SUIT.—A suit composed of both high cards and numerical strength.

SUB-ECHO.—To show the original possession of three trumps.

SUIT.—One of the four main divisions of the pack, as the *club* suit.

TENACE.—The best and third-best cards of a suit in play is a *major tenace*, as ace, queen, against the *minor tenace* of k, kn—the second and fourth-best.

THIRD HAND.—The leader's partner.

THIRTEENTH.—The last card of any suit in play.

THROWING THE LEAD.—Purposely playing a losing card that you may not remain in the lead.

TIERCE.—Sequence of three cards, as *tierce to king*, is—king, queen and knave.

TRICK.—The four cards of a round—the three played to the card led.

TRUMPS.—All the cards of the same suit as the card turned by dealer.

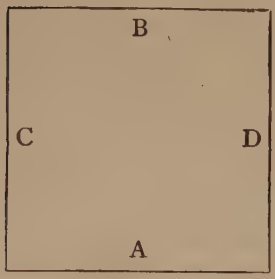
TRUMP CARD.—The last card of the pack, and the one the dealer turns face up to his right.

UNDERPLAY.—Playing a low card when holding a higher one—refusing to take a trick. Also termed *holding up*.

WEAK SUIT.—One containing few or no high cards.

YARBOROUGH.—A hand in which all the cards are smaller than the 10.

The Table.

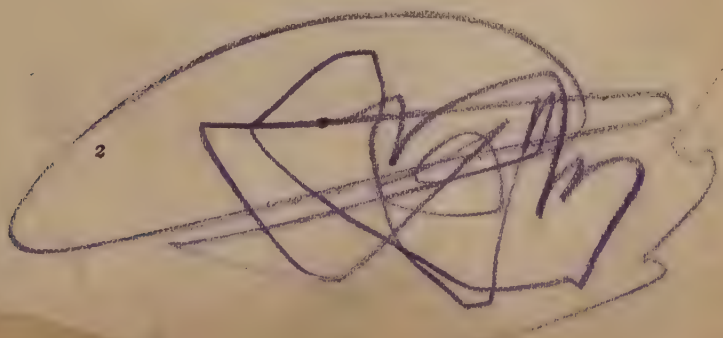


This diagram illustrates *the table*. A and B are partners; C and D the opposing partners. D is the dealer, and A the leader, when not otherwise stated. "You" generally signifies "A," and "B" means *your partner*. "C" is second hand to the original lead, "B" third hand, "D" fourth hand.

Abbreviations.

Spade or spades—"s."
Heart or hearts—"h."
Club or clubs—"c."
Diamond or diamonds—"d."
King—"k."
Queen—"qu."
Knave—"kn."

The cards below the knave are designated by the digits—10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. The 3 and 2 are also called the *Trey* and *Deuce*.



CHAPTER II.

THE FIRST HAND OR LEAD.

THE theory of modern scientific whist is the combination of forces; this demands a systematic course and affords the original leader of the hand but little choice as to which card to lead, after the suit has been determined upon. It is conventional to open the suit that has the greatest numerical strength, and experience has demonstrated that this is usually best. The card to lead is the one that will at once afford the most information and at the same time be in harmony with the general order. This brings the whole scheme of leading within the scope of general principles, and makes it practicable to prepare a table of leads that will harmonize, and be applicable to all but exceptional hands. It follows that if partners adopt the same system, they at once begin to count the hands, and are thus enabled to combine their forces and really play a partnership game. Each card thrown will carry with it a certain amount of information, and the first card of all will proclaim almost the exact combination led from.

A table embracing all the leads has the appearance of being extremely complicated and intricate; this in reality is not the case. There are 635,013,559,600 possible hands at whist. So also would it take a family of ten persons sitting at dinner 3,628,800 days or nearly 10,000 years to make all the changes possible in their chairs at the table,—making one change a day. On the same principle the five highest cards—ace, king, queen, knave,

ten—can be arranged 120 different ways. This is the mathematical feature of it; the practical part of it is that there are virtually but *twelve* combinations from which a high card is led. The combinations forming the basis for the high card leads are few, their possible variations enormous.

Each of the following "high"* cards: Ace, king, queen, knave, 10, 9, with the exception of the queen, is led, at the most, from only two combinations (the queen from three). The "middle" card, the 8, and the 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, are termed "low" cards, and are led from all other combinations, and are always led (barring exceptional situations) as fourth-best cards—*i. e.*, the leader has three cards in the suit higher than the one led.

The combinations of high cards which form the *basis* of all high-card leads will be analyzed before giving the leads in detail.

This card is led from two combinations, and marks five or more cards in suit, or ace, queen, knave, four or more in suit. Here are the two combinations from which the ace is led:

1.— —and *any one* or more.

2.— —and *any four* or more which do not include *both* king and queen.

* The student is referred to the chapter on Technical Terms, in which will be found all the technical terms used in this work, together with their meaning.

No. 1.—In this combination the ace is led when accompanied with the queen and knave, even if only four in suit. No. 2, however, forms the basis of all the numerous leads of this card. In explanation of No 2, the student is reminded that when he decides to open a suit of *five* or more cards, the ace being one, and the suit not containing *both* king and queen, the ace is the card to lead. In exceptional hands the fourth best may be led from ace and four or more cards, when all the other cards are small ones, as—ace, 6, 5, 4, 3. It matters not which four (or more) of all the twelve cards of the suit are with the ace—lead ace; so that, as a general principle, to know when it is conventional to lead the ace, is a very simple matter. (But *see* p. 96.)

The king is led originally from a suit of *exactly four* cards, and from these two combinations only :—

3.— —and *any* two.

4.— —and *any* two.

Here again the student is reminded how simple the general rule is for leading the king—there must be four cards *only* of the suit, and the king must invariably be accompanied by either ace or queen. It matters not what three cards—high or low—are with the king, if the ace or queen is one. (But *see* p. 75.)

The old lead of the king from ace, king—or king, queen and more than two others—is now obsolete. Th

better play has relegated it to the shelf together with the many *good* things that the *better* things have crowded out.

This card is led from these three combinations :—

5.— —and any two or more in which the knave is not included.

6.— —and any three or more in which the knave is not included.

7.— —and any one or more small, including the 9 as a small card.

The queen announces a suit of five cards or more (except that in No. 7 there may be only four), and declares that either king, or ace, king are in hand. If the lead is from No. 7, the fall to the first round in conjunction with the cards partner holds in the suit will nearly always show it.

The knave is led from two combinations :—

8.— —and *any* one or more.

9.— —and *any* two or more.

It will be seen that the knave shows the king and queen—possibly the ace also, and proclaims a suit of at least five cards.

Most of the authorities, and many of the finest players, have abandoned the lead of the knave from knave, 10, 9, etc. Analysis demonstrates that there is little if any advantage in favor of the lead of the knave as against the fourth-best. The best players do not cover the knave second hand with either the king or queen, as the ace must be to the left, thus annulling the principal object in leading the knave from the tierce to knave combination. As a matter of taking tricks in the one suit, the lead of the knave may perhaps be slightly the better lead. In the majority of situations it is immaterial; in the others the combinations in favor of the knave or the fourth-best. are about equally divided. The object in abandoning the lead of the knave from the head of a sequence is found in the fact that it greatly simplifies the play of third hand and removes—practically—all duality of inference. The trend of modern whist, in the matter of high-card leads, is in the direction of simplification; and perfection seems to have been reached in this regard, for the high-card leads, as now favored, herald almost the exact holding.

This card is led from one combination only :—

10.— —and *any* one or more small—including the 9 as a small card.

The lead of the 10 marks the king, knave, and denies the ace and queen. (But *see* Appendix A.)

The nine is led from two combinations and shows—like the king—*exactly* four cards:—(*Bar trumps.*)

11.— —only.

12.— —only.

The 9 marks the ace, 10, and either queen or knave.

The following table shows in condensed form the twelve combinations which are the basis of all the high-card leads. (But *see* Appendix A.)

Table of Leads, No. 1.

LEAD		FROM
Ace.	1	Ace, qu, kn—and *any* one or more.
	2	Ace—and any four or more which do not include both kg and qu.
King.	3	Ace, kg—and *any* two.
	4	King, qu—and *any* two.
Queen.	5	Ace, kg, qu—and any two or more in which the kn is not included.
	6	King, qu—and any three or more in which the kn is not included.
	7	Queen, kn, 10—and one or more small.
Knave.	8	Ace, kg, qu, kn—and *any* one or more.
	9	King, qu, kn—and *any* two or more.
10.	10	King, kn, 10—and any one or more (including the 9).
9.	11	Ace, qu, 10, 9—only.
	12	Ace, kn, 10, 9—only.

The Fourth Best.

The 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 are led, as original leads, only as fourth-best cards, and, as in the case of a high card being led, represent the best suit in hand. The leader has exactly three cards in the suit higher in rank than the card led; and an inference is that these three cards are not high cards in sequence. When a low card (plain suit) is led originally, the leader cannot hold of the suit led, ace and king; king and queen; queen, knave and 10; or king, knave, 10; the ace is also denied if the fall shows that the leader has any card of the suit lower than the card led, as with more than four the ace is usually led. (But *see* p. 96.)

The 8 is the seventh card in rank counting from either end of the suit, hence it is termed the "middle card." It follows that there are six cards higher than this card, and, when the 8 is led originally, three of these higher cards must be in the leader's hand. This card is led from ten combinations, five of which are from *exactly* four in suit, the ace at the head. The student cannot become too familiar with the rank of the different cards. It is this familiarity that enables the expert to draw inferences rapidly, and with but little mental effort. In the play of a single hand at Whist there are so many things to note, and so many inferences to draw, that few players ever become very proficient. This is in a large measure due to the fact that few take the comparatively little pains necessary to know all about the rank and value of the

different cards. Most people who play Whist seem to prefer to rest satisfied with an informal introduction, as it were, to the cards, and never get upon intimate terms with them.

There are ten combinations from which the 8 is led, as shown by the following tabulation:

Eight Leads.

	FROM	LEAD
1..	Ace, qu, 10...	8
2..	Ace, qu, 9....	8
3..	Ace, kn, 10...	8
4..	Ace, kn, 9....	8
5..	Ace, 10, 9....	8
6..	Kg, kn, 9....	8*
7..	Kg, 10, 9....	8*
8..	Qu, kn, 9....	8*
9..	Qu, 10, 9....	8*
10..	Kn, 10, 9....	8*

* The combinations Nos. 6 to 10 inclusive, may be of exactly four cards or any one of them may contain any or all of the cards smaller than the 8.

These leads of the 8 will repay careful analysis. Note that of the ten leads five are from *exactly four* cards, and that if a card is added lower than the 8 to any of these five combinations, then the ace must be led; if a card higher than the 8 is added, the combination becomes one of the twelve found in table No. 1 (page 23), and a high card must be led. Note also, that if any player holds the ace and 9; 10 and 9; ace, kn, 9; qu, kn, 9, etc., to the 8 led in plain suit, the lead is forced, and the leader cannot have three cards higher than the one led.

This immediate information may be very valuable.

Suppose A gets in after a round or two, and leads the 8, and B holds the ace and 9 or the 10 and 9, he knows at once that A has, owing to his particular situation, made a forced lead. Examine a little deeper into this table and it will be seen that there are just 20 possible combinations of three cards higher than the 8, and the leader (leading the 8) can hold just half of these, and that there are ten he cannot hold. This knowledge can be utilized in determining whether the lead is regular or forced. B, holding three cards higher than the 8, knows, of course, if the lead of the 8, by A, is regular, that the 8 will hold the trick. But suppose B's three higher cards are not headed by the ace or king, he then knows that the lead is forced, and it may be best for his hand that he does not pass. For instance, if a player holds ace, k, 9; ace, qu, 9; ace, kn, 10; ace, kn, 9; k, 10, 9, or any three cards higher than the 8 headed by the qu or kn, he knows at once that the lead of the 8 is forced and plays accordingly.

Take the case of B holding the ace, k, 9 and one or more small, A leading the 8; if B passes, thinking the 8 must win the trick, B holding three cards higher than the 8, B defers to the third round the bringing home of his ace; and in the event of the 8 losing to fourth hand, B may lose a trick; besides A may have led the 8 from two cards only, and if B plays king and then leads ace, A may wish to trump the third round, having led the forced lead for this purpose, trumps, for instance, having been declared against.

The point is that a player must not pass an 8 led by partner simply because he has three cards of the suit higher, if he can determine from his hand that the lead is forced. Many players fail to make all the use available of the fourth-best principle, and this is particularly

true when a card so high in rank as the 8, 7 or 6 is led.

Again: Suppose B holds the qu, kn; qu, 10; qu, 9; kn, 10; kn, 9 or 10 and one or more small, to the lead of the 8 by A (as the original lead of the hand), B should know instantly that either ace or king is against and that the 8 must force one of these cards or hold the trick. It would be folly to put up the qu, kn, 10, or 9 unless he wished to make an effort to gain the lead. (*See* "Third Hand.")

The student will see that there are many inferences to be drawn from the lead of the eight, and that the table of eight leads is well worth careful study.

These cards like the 8, are all led as fourth-best cards, disregarding the card or cards that may be held lower than the one led. All the combinations from which the 7 is led, follow in tabular form. These tables, showing the various leads of the 8 and 7, will be useful when the play of the second hand is under analysis.

The possible combinations multiply as you descend the scale. For instance the 10 is led from *one* combination, the 9 from *two;* the 8 from *ten* and the 7 from *twenty-three*, and this, too, without regard to the one or more cards that may be held below the fourth-best card. This table, like the preceding one, will repay careful study, for the 7 is a card of high rank (as a fourth-best card), and the inferences that may sometimes be drawn are very valuable. (*See* "analysis of the second and third hand"—the 8 and 7 led.)

Seven Leads.

FROM	LEAD	FROM	LEAD
Ace, qu, 10.	7	Kg, 10, 8...	7*
Ace, qu, 9..	7	Kg, 9, 8....	7*
Ace, qu, 8..	7	Qu, kn, 9...	7*
Ace, kn, 10.	7	Qu, kn, 8...	7*
Ace, kn, 9..	7	Qu, 10, 9...	7*
Ace, kn, 8..	7	Qu, 10, 8...	7*
Ace, 10, 9..	7	Qu, 9, 8....	7*
Ace, 10, 8..	7	Kn, 10, 9...	7*
Ace, 9, 8...	7	Kn, 10, 8...	7*
Kg, kn, 9...	7*	Kn, 9, 8....	7*
Kg, kn, 8...	7*	10, 9, 8....	7*
Kg, 10, 9...	7*		

* When the ace does not head the suit, there may be one or more cards lower than the 7, and these may, of course, be any one or more of all the smaller cards.

When this card of lowest rank is led as an original lead it is, as a rule, an announcement of weakness. It marks, of course, a suit of exactly four cards and, barring exceptional hands, the leader can have no plain suit of more than four cards; he cannot have ace, kg; kg, qu; or qu, kn, 10 of any suit of four cards. As an original trump lead, the leader shows (as a rule) three plain suits of three cards each and four trumps. This little deuce has quite an interesting story to relate when it goes, first of all, into the breach.

That the analyses of leads in detail, showing the leads —first and second—may be readily understood, it is best to first critically examine the three cardinal principles of American Leads. There are three modes of

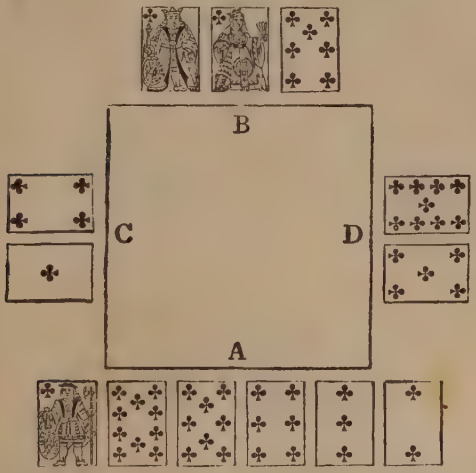
opening a strong suit, viz.: 1. Low card led. 2. High card followed by low card. 3. High card followed by high card.

Low Card Led.

1.—When you open a suit with a LOW CARD, lead your FOURTH BEST.

This maxim has been briefly examined (pages 24 to 26), and now a few examples showing the practical working of this important principle are given.

Suppose the following :—



1.—A leads 6 ; C plays 4 ; B plays qu ; D plays 5.

B reads A with three cards higher than the 6, and (bar calling) he knows that A has led from a six-card suit, for the trey and deuce must be with A. B also knows that the ace is with C, for if A held the ace (six in suit) he would have led ace, not fourth best. B can read

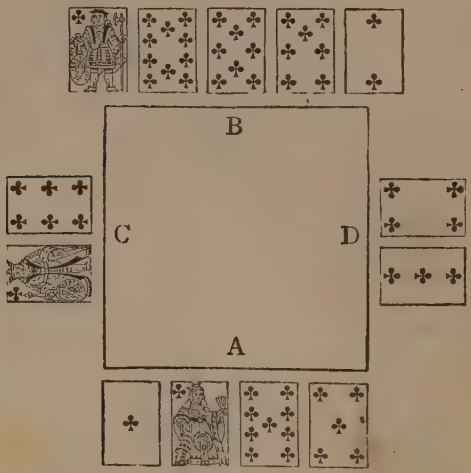
that D can have but *one* more card of the suit, and if he (D) follows to the next trick the suit will be established.

This information afforded so early in the play of the suit may be very valuable to B.

2.—B leads k ; D plays 9 ; A plays 3 ; C plays ace.

A is marked with the kn, 10, 8, 2. If A opens with the trey or deuce the fall is the same as when the 6 is led, but it will afford B little information, and even after the second round, B cannot read A with command.

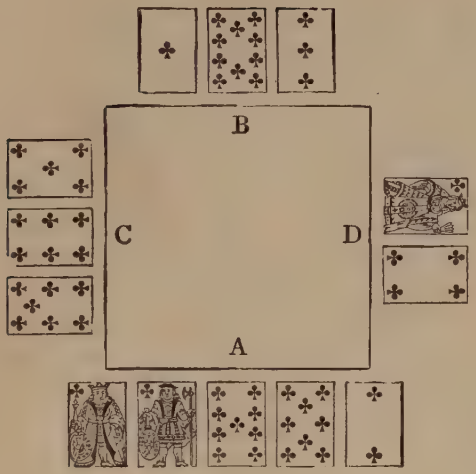
Again :—



1.—A leads 5 ; C plays 6 ; B plays 7 ; D plays 3.

When C played the 6, B could read that A's lead was from *exactly* ace, qu, 9, 5, and that C (if not calling) held king single, or was void of the suit. B plays the 7, knowing that it must hold the trick or force the king. The 7 holding the trick, marks C with king, and B knows *at once* that the suit is established.

Once more :—



1.—A leads 8 ; C plays 5 ; B plays ace ; D plays 4.

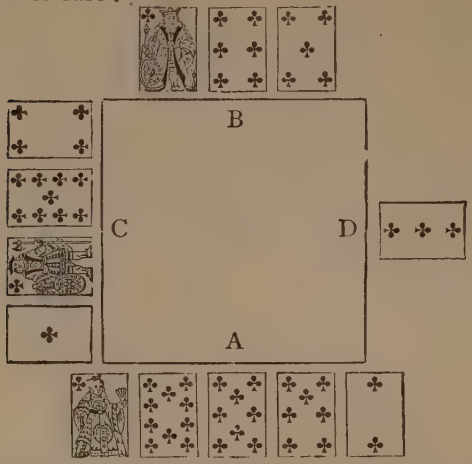
B reads at once that A has led from k, kn, 9, 8, 2, or qu, kn, 9, 8, 2.

2.—B leads 10 ; D plays qu ; A plays k ; C plays 6.

B reads that the suit is established. Had A started with the deuce, B could not have read the location of any one card, even after the second round.

The student may be reminded that such marked advantages do not always attend the lead of the fourth-best card, and that not infrequently the opponents profit by the information afforded.

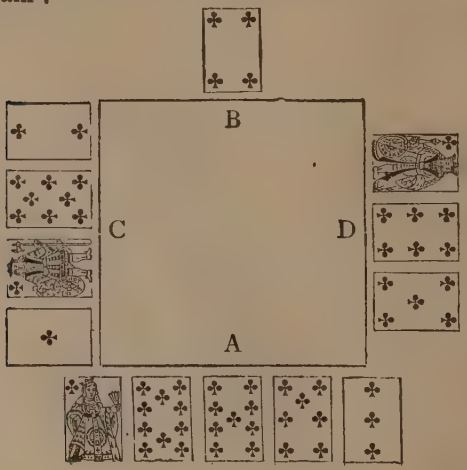
Take this case :—



1.—A leads 7 ; C plays 4 ; B plays k ; D plays 3.

C reads the qu, 10, 8, in A's hand, and if A next leads the suit C is directed to a safe finesse.

Or again :—



1.—A leads 7 ; C plays 8 ; B plays 4 ; D plays 5.

Here the lead of the 7, the fourth-best, directs second hand to cover with the 8, saving D's king, and if the king is with B no harm is done.

The lead of the fourth-best often enables second hand to make a sure finesse or a judicious cover (see the play of second hand, the 8 and 7 led), and in various ways the opponents may gain an advantage in consequence of the precise information afforded. Still this mode of opening a suit has been tested by careful and thorough analysis and the balance of advantage unquestionably lies with the play of the fourth best.

High card led (followed by low card).

2.—When you open a strong suit with the ACE, KING or QUEEN, and next lead a LOW CARD, lead your FOURTH-BEST counting from and including the card first led.

This maxim comes into force when the following combinations are held, and only when the first lead wins the trick.

Ace and four—in trumps, six—or more small cards.

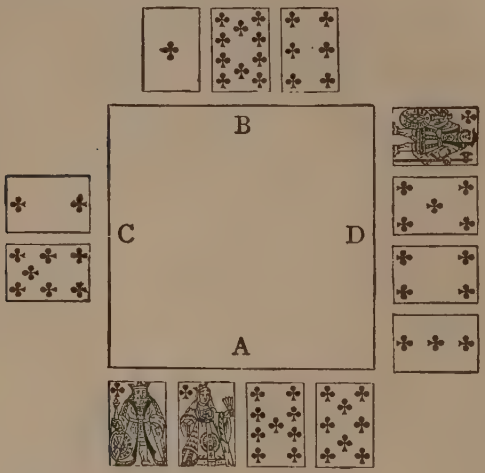
King, queen and exactly two small cards (in trumps five or more small).

King, queen and three—in trumps, five—or more small cards.

Combinations from which the *knave*, *ten* or *nine* is led, are not included in this group, as then the maxim does not apply. The knave, when led from strength, is always followed by a *higher* card than the knave. The nine when led from strength is likewise followed by a *higher* card. The ten is a special lead, and unlike all other high-card leads, does not give information as to numerical strength. When this maxim is applied to the case of

10 winning, from k, kn, 10, it has no practical value, as the lead must be from six or more in suit in order to follow the rule. Besides partner could rarely, if ever, read that the leader had followed the maxim even when the latter held a sufficient number of cards to do so. This lead and its correct follow will be examined later on.

The first and the last combinations given above are practically the only ones subject to the second maxim of American Leads ; for in the case of the king lead there can be but four cards in suit and the lead *per se* announces the exact numerical strength, and if a low card is next led, it is obviously the lowest of the suit—*i. e.*, the fourth-best. This combination may be dismissed with a single illustration. As :—



1.—A leads k ; C plays 2 ; B plays 6 ; D plays 3.

The king winning, the ace is supposed to be with B When the k loses the next lead is, of course, the qu.

2.—A leads 8 ; C plays 7 ; B plays ace ; D plays 4.

A is marked with the queen and one card higher than the 8, and the cards are so distributed that B can read that A has the 9, and D the 5. The knave may be with either C or D.

The leads—ace, then low; queen (winning), then low, are shown in the following table :—

FROM	LEAD		THEN	
	Ace	10 8	7	6
	Ace	10 8	7	6 5
	Ace	10 8	7	6 5 4
(*a*) King..	Queen ...	10 8	7	
King..	Queen ...	10 8	7	6
King..	Queen ...	10 8	7	6 5

(*a*) *If the qu loses to the ace, the second lead is, of course, the king.*

In each instance the second lead is the fourth-best card, counting from, and including, the card first led, irrespective of the number of cards in the suit. The object of this is to inform partner that you have two cards of intermediate rank between the first and second cards led. This usually, in practise, informs the leader's partner of the exact rank of these two cards, as well as of the numerical strength of the suit. It is true that this exact information is often given to the opponents as well, but, notwithstanding, it is the experience of most players that it is a decided advantage, in the majority of cases, to publish the information.

The entire system of modern whist is based upon the principle of imparting by your play the greatest amount of information possible. Exceptional situations often arise where a shrewd player will withhold information,

when it is obvious that partner is not in a position to profit by it while his opponents are.

It must not be forgotten that at all times all rules stand second to the fall of the cards.

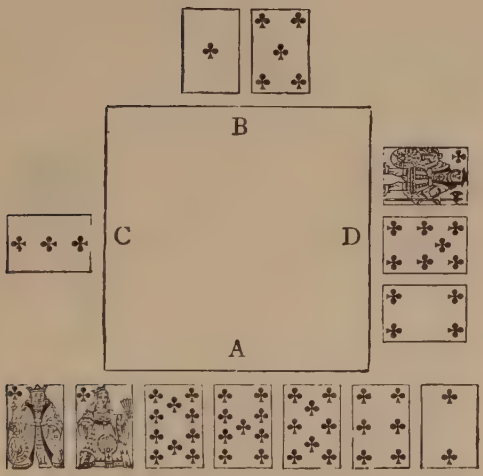
Keep in view the fact that there are such things as exceptional situations, and that all rules and maxims are intended to cover situations that usually occur; the unusual situations must be met by the individual ingenuity and whist perception of the player.

Queen, then Low.

The lead of queen (the queen winning), then fourth-best will now be examined. Objections have been urged against the adoption of the second maxim of American Leads, as well as against the recent innovation of Mr. N. B. Trist, the inventor of these leads, of leading the fourth-best, after winning queen, *counting from and including the card first led.* Formerly the *original* fourth-best was led. As:—k, qu, 10, 8, 7; the qu, then 8 was led. It is now proposed to lead qu then original fifth-best, 7, thus showing two cards of intermediate rank between the queen and the card selected for the second lead.

There are advantages in favor of this mode of opening this combination as compared with queen then *original* fourth-best. It will be found upon analysis that the lead of the original fifth-best, after queen winning, will often yield information that the lead of the fourth-best will withhold, and no disadvantages attend the play.

Suppose the following :—



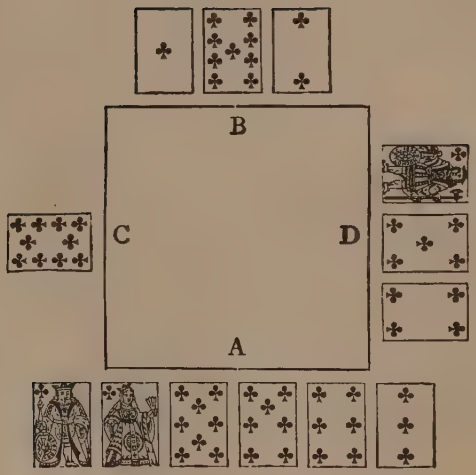
1.—A leads qu ; C plays 3 ; B plays 5 ; D plays 4.

2.—A leads 9 ; C trumps ; B plays ace ; D plays 7.

B can read that A has k, 10, 6, 2, yet in hand, but the 8 may be with D, and if so A has not command. But suppose:—

2.—A leads 8—the k, 10, 9, are now marked with A, and C renouncing and the 7 falling from D, marks the 6, 2 also with leader, and D can have but the kn, single.

Again:—

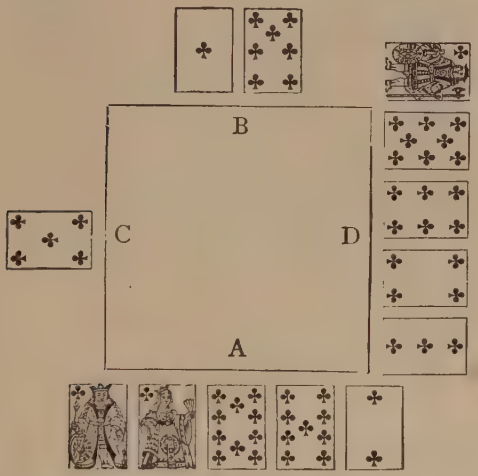


1.—A leads qu ; C plays 10 ; B plays 2 ; D plays 4.

2.—A leads 6 ; C trumps ; B plays ace ; D plays 5.

B can read that A has the k, 8, 7, 3 (bar the possibility of D calling) and he plays the ace, as D's kn, which must be unguarded, will fall to A's k and the suit is cleared. If A follows the qu with the 7, the original fourth-best, B cannot read that D has not the 6.

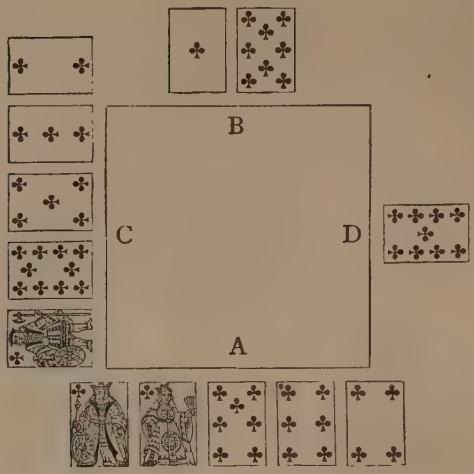
A trick may also be lost, due to the sacrifice of the fourth-best card, as the following position demonstrates:—



1.—A leads qu ; C plays 5 , B plays 7 ; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 9 ; C renounces ; B plays ace ; D plays 4.

If A is forced to next lead the suit, D may make his kn, 8. But if A follows the qu with his fifth-best card—the 2—D cannot possibly make but a single trick. A may lose a trick by following the qu with his original fourth-best, even though he sacrifices no higher card than the 6, as:—



1.—A leads qu ; C plays 2 ; B plays 8 ; D plays 9.

2.—A leads 6 ; C plays 3 ; B plays ace ; D discards.

3. (C to lead).—C leads 10 ; B and D discard ; A plays k.

4. (A to lead).—A leads—C must make the kn, 5.

Here, C makes two tricks in the suit, even though he leads at trick three ; and if A leads at trick three, C must make two tricks, no matter who next leads the suit. But, on the ôther hand, suppose:—

2.—A leads 4 ; C plays 3 ; B plays ace ; D discards.

Now if C next leads the suit he takes but the single trick.

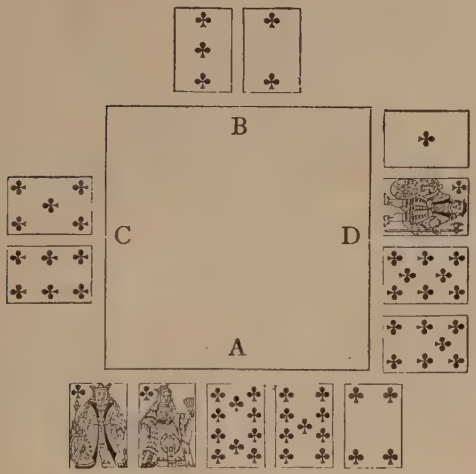
3. (A to lead).—A leads 6 ; C plays 10 ; B and D discard.

4. (C to lead).—C leads to a tenace and must lose both tricks. The possibility of loss, in each of the instances pointed out, is, of course, remote ; but it is in the cards.

The feature of protection does not apply here with

any force, for except in rare cases, if the queen wins, the ace is with partner, as it is exceptional for the opponents to refuse to take the qu, with a hand sufficiently strong in the suit to gain through the next lead of the fifth-best.

For example :—



1.—A leads qu ; C plays 5 ; B plays 2 ; D plays 7.

D might be induced to hold up the ace, especially if strong enough in trumps to desire them led—as it would suggest to A the advisability of a trump lead to protect his suit, which inferentially is established. Besides D can read that if A next leads his original fifth-best (bar trumps) his 8 is likely to win the second round.

2.—A leads 4 ; C plays 6 ; B plays 3 ; D plays 8.

And D must win two tricks—three if A next leads the suit. If A follows with the 9; D can take but two

tricks. In plain suits, it is, however, rarely good play to pass the queen, and it should not be forgotten that the leader is always at liberty to depart from rule, if the fall is exceptional. This phase of the question, protection, may be dismissed as having no weight. The questions of unblocking and showing command are likewise hardly worth consideration. The advantage of leading as proposed may be said to rest solely upon the ground of enabling partner to count the hands; and in the opinion of the writer this is alone sufficient reason for the adoption of the lead of the original fifth-best after a winning queen, or to word it so that it covers the case of the ace—the "*fourth-best counting from and including the card first led.*"

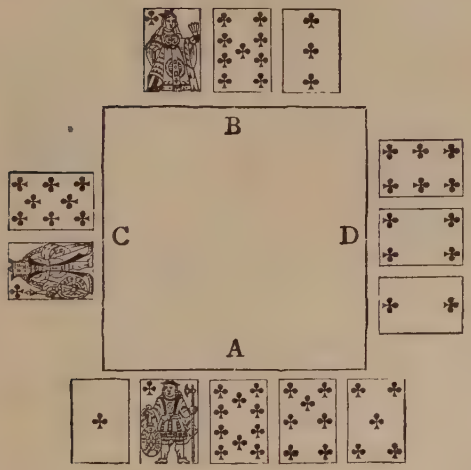
Ace, then Low.

In the case of ace, then low, the questions of unblocking, exhibiting command, protection and adverse finessing, all arise. Each must be taken into consideration. Objections have been urged against the play of the original fourth-best, after the lead of the ace. The objections rest upon the assumption that the play is too informatory. It has been proposed to curtail the information by the lead—after the ace—of the fourth-best, of those remaining. When strength in the suit is massed in the second hand, the precise information afforded by the lead of the ace, then fourth-best, directs the second hand to finesse. That is to say, when an *exceptional* distribution occurs, loss may ensue by following the now generally accepted play. The writer believes that the balance of advantage lies with the mode of leading as laid down in the maxim. Most players are of the opinion that in the majority of cases it is an advantage to publish information, and that, the more precise and

strictly defined, the more advantageous it is in the long run. If this is not true the theory of the modern game is unsound.

A few examples illustrating the practical application of this maxim, now follow.

Unblocking.



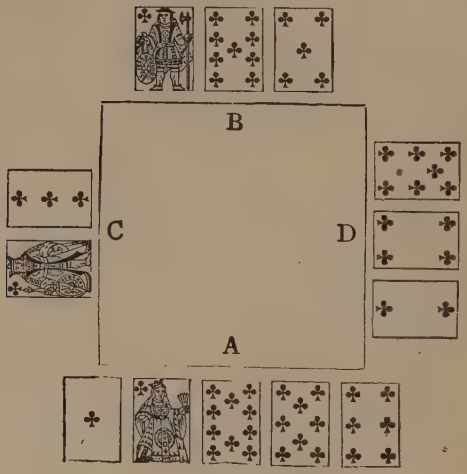
1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 3; D plays 2.

2.—A leads 7; C plays k; B plays qu; D plays 4.

If A follows the ace with the 5, the fourth-best of those remaining, then B cannot read that the lead is not from

ace, 10, 7, 6, 5, and he must retain the qu, thus blocking the suit.

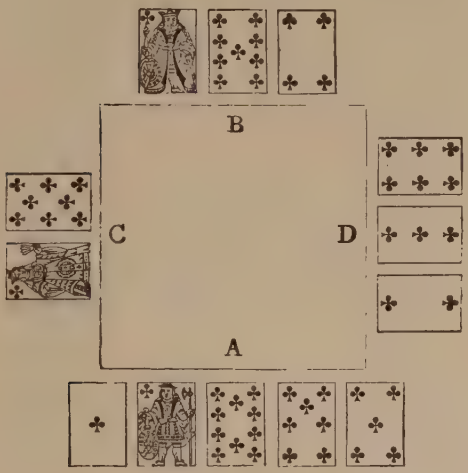
Exhibiting Command.



1.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 5; D plays 2.
2.—A leads 8; C plays k; B plays 9; D plays 4.
B gives A the qu, 10 and either the 7 or 6. If A's

second lead is the 6, then for anything B can read, the qu may be with D, and the suit not established.

Again:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 4; D plays 2.

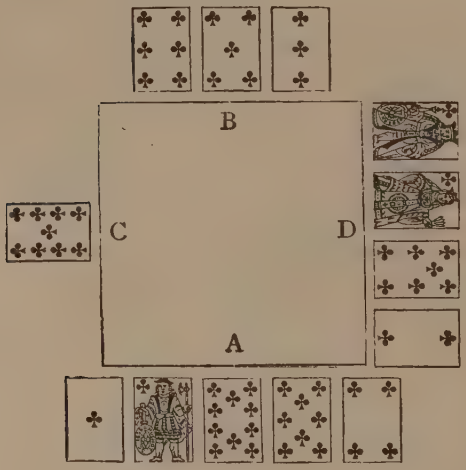
2.—A leads 7; C plays qu: B plays k; D plays 3.

B reads A with the command. Had A followed with the 5, then the kn could be with D—the control with the adversary—and this might make a great difference in B's game. In the foregoing examples, and in all similar distributions of the cards—and note that they are

not exceptional combinations—there is a decided advantage in the second lead if the original fourth-best, as against the fourth-best of those remaining.

Protection.

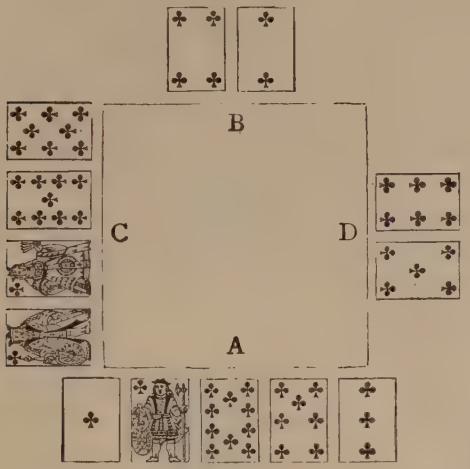
In certain combinations as—ace, qu, 10, 9, etc.; ace, kn, 10, 9, etc.; and in other combinations, due to the fall, the leader must follow the ace with the original fourth-best, as a protection. For example:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 9; B plays 3; D plays 2. If A now leads the 4, the 7 wins and a trick is lost

Adverse Finessing.

The disadvantages that attend the play are found in positions similar to the following:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 2; D plays 5.

2.—A leads 7; C plays 9; B plays 4; D plays 6.

The precise information afforded by the lead of the 7 directs C to play the 9. Had A followed with the 3, C must have played qu.

(For a further analysis of this subject, *see* appendix A.)

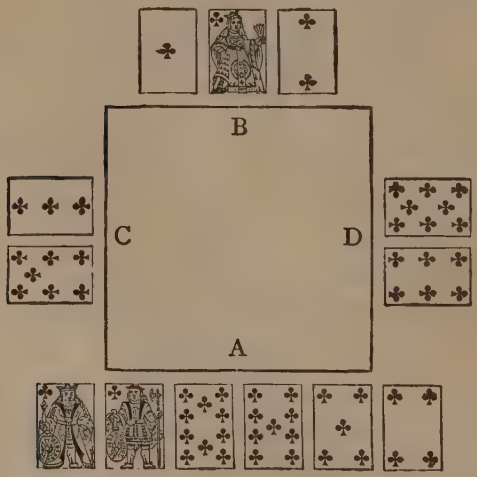
Ten, then Low.

When 10 is led, as an original lead, from more than four in suit, and wins the trick, the second lead, in the writer's opinion, should be the original fourth-best, and not the lowest of the suit. The 10 winning the trick, the nature of the combination led from and the position of all the high cards are proclaimed; for if the play to

the 10 is correct, third hand must hold ace, qu, or qu of the suit, and the only high card that can be against leader is the ace in second hand.

When 10 wins the trick, it is immaterial as far as the making of tricks in this suit is concerned, whether the leader selects the lowest or the original fourth-best for his second lead, as adverse finessing, unblocking and protection do not play a part. The only object the leader has in the lead of the fourth-best, is to enable partner to count the number of cards held in the suit. It is clearly an advantage for partner to be able to read the numerical strength of an *established* suit as early as the second round.

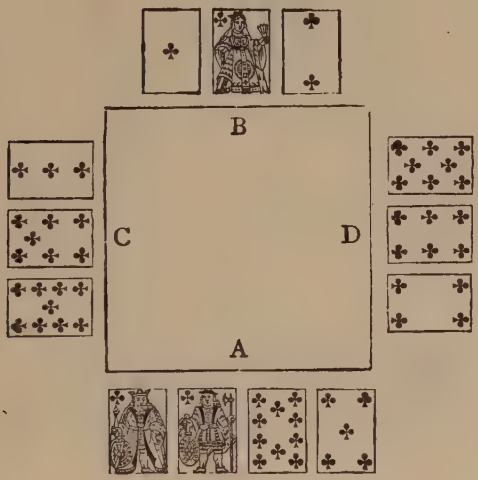
Suppose the following :—



1.—A leads 10 ; C plays 3 ; B plays 2 ; D plays 6.
2.—A leads 9 ; C plays 7 ; B plays ace ; D plays 8.

B can now read that A has the k, kn, 5, 4 yet in hand. If A follows the 10, with the 4 or 5, the 9 may be with either C or D, for all that B can read.

Again :—

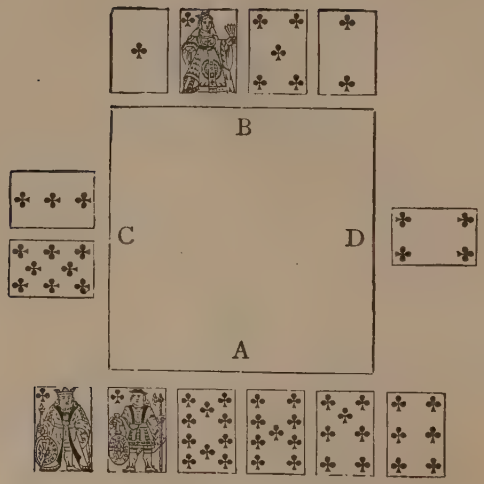


1.—A leads 10 ; C plays 3 ; B plays 2 ; D plays 4.

2.—A leads 5 ; C plays 7 ; B plays ace ; D plays 6.

And B reads that the 9, 8, are with the opponents. But if the rule of leading the fourth best, is not adhered to, A, in this case, might have both of these cards.

Again :—

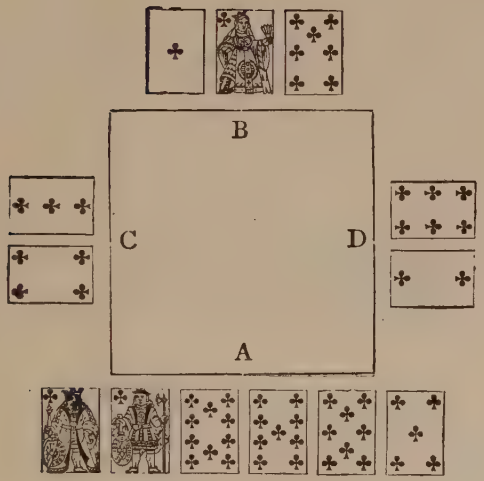


1.—A leads 10 ; C plays 3 ; B plays 5 ; D plays 4.
2.—A leads 9 ; C plays 8 ; B plays qu ; D renounces.

(B unblocks ; *see* third-hand play—the 10 led.)

A reads B with the ace, deuce, and B gives A the remainder of the suit. Had A followed with any card but the 9, B could not have read A's hand.

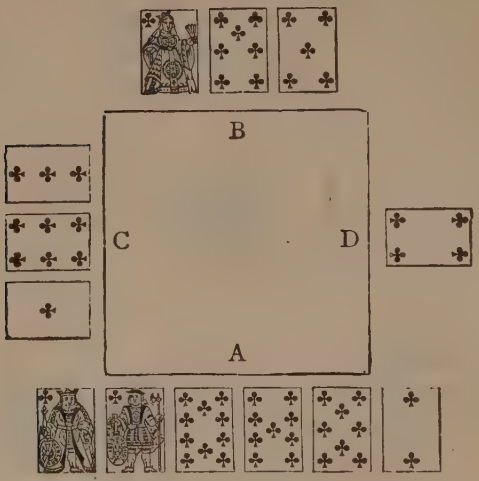
Take this case:—



1.—A leads 10 ; C plays 3 ; B plays 7 ; D plays 2.
2.—A leads 9 ; C plays 4 ; B plays ace ; D plays 6.

The cards lie so that B cannot read that A has the 8, 5. But neither could he read A's hand had he followed with either of these cards.

Once more :—



1.—A leads 10 ; C plays 3 ; B plays 5 ; D plays 4.
2.—A leads 2 ; C plays ace ; B plays qu ; D discards.

Now, so far as B can read, C may have the 9, 8, 6, and A the k, kn, only. But if A follows the 10 with the 9, the deuce is at once proclaimed with A.

Whenever the leader's small cards are of lower rank than those played by the opponents in the two rounds, these small cards can be placed in the leader's hand, if the rule of leading the original fourth-best, after 10, is followed. If the lowest is led after 10, partner may not be able to read the leader's numerical strength in the suit, as the foregoing illustrations demonstrate. No disadvantages attend the play of the fourth-best, as the information published is a declaration of strength.

The lead of 10 gives no information of numerical

strength, and information concerning the latter must be given on the second lead, or not at all. As pointed out elsewhere, when the 10 loses to queen, or forces both ace and qu, the holding of exactly four is shown by the next lead of the k, and more than four by the second lead of kn, and if the 10 wins, why should not the leader likewise make an effort to proclaim his numerical strength by leading the highest of his remaining small cards, thus enabling partner to place the smaller ones in his hand?

High Card Led (*Followed by High Card*).

When you open a suit with a high card, and follow with a high card, select the card for the second lead that will convey the greatest amount of information in reference to the numerical strength of the suit and the high cards it contains. The general rule for this is: —

3.—When you open a strong suit with a high card, and remain with two (or more) high indifferent cards, lead the higher (or highest) to show the minimum numerical strength; the lower (or lowest) to show more than the minimum strength.

The third maxim of American Leads applies to the following combinations:—

1.—Ace, king, queen, knave, and one or more small cards.

2.—Ace, king, queen, and two or more small cards.

3.—Ace, queen, knave, and one or more small cards.

4.—King, queen, knave, and two or more small cards.

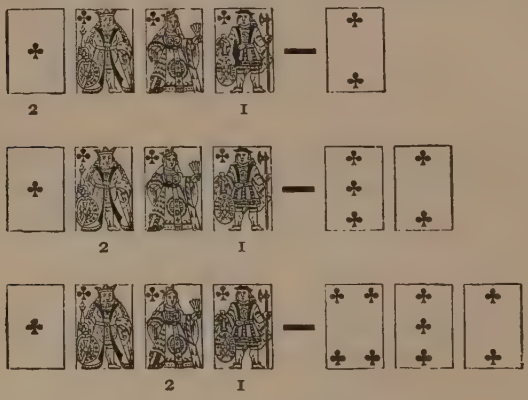
5.—King, knave, 10, and one or more small cards.

6.—Queen, knave, 10, and one or more small cards.

7.—Knave, 10, 9, and one or more small cards. (Trumps only.)

There can be shown by lead and follow four, five, six or seven cards in suit, according to the combination of high cards from which the leads are made.

The quart major combination in tabular form, will render the application of this maxim more clear :—



With sequence of knave to ace and any number of small cards, the lead is the knave. (*See* Table No. 1, p. 11.) The knave announces a suit of, at least, five cards —the minimum number from which the knave is led. So far as taking tricks in this suit is concerned, you could open with ace and follow with knave just as well, but planning for the play of twenty-six cards, not five or thirteen, the order is all for the purpose of imparting information. Now, the knave, then ace marks the minimum—king, queen and *one* small card. Let the student thoroughly understand this : the knave is only led from quart ma-

jor or tierce to king, five or more in suit, consequently the lead of knave, then ace, marks the stronger combination. After the lead of the knave, the leader has three cards of equal trick-making value. Now apply the maxim "lead the highest to show the minimum numerical strength"—this points to the ace, and ace following knave shows *exactly* five in suit.

Holding quart major, six cards in suit, the second lead is the king, and the play shows a suit of *exactly* six cards (the knave and king winning, and ace not in third hand).

With quart major, seven or more in all, the first lead is still the knave—again apply the maxim—"lead the lowest to show *more* than the minimum strength." The knave and queen winning, the ace, king, and *at least three* small cards are proclaimed; by the second lead of the queen—the lowest of the three high indifferent cards—the maximum numerical strength, that can be shown, is marked with the leader

Showing six or seven cards in suit may not often be of practical value, yet again it may result in the gain of a trick or more; besides, for the sake of uniformity, the rule should be adhered to. Negative inference is often valuable. If B, with only eight cards, knows that A has shown five of a plain suit yet in hand, he also knows that A cannot hold *four* trumps. Suppose A shows seven spades, then leads diamonds (trumps) showing four, and subsequently plays two hearts, B knows absolutely that A can have no club and if expedient B can lead a small club with the assurance that A can trump.

Take the second combination—ace, king, queen, and two or more small cards. The first lead is the queen. If the ace is next led—the higher of the two indifferent cards, the leader shows the minimum, king and two small remaining; if the king, the lower of the indiffer-

ent cards, the ace and *at least three* small cards are shown.

In the case of the ace, queen, knave and one or more small cards, the ace is led. The queen and knave are indifferent cards. If the second lead is the queen, the minimum is shown, *i. e.*, knave and *one* small card; if the knave follows the ace—the knave being the lower of the indifferent cards—*more* than the minimum numerical strength is announced.

Take the fourth combination—king, queen, knave, and two or more. Here the first lead of the knave shows *per se* five in suit—the minimum. If the king follows the knave it shows that the lead was from the minimum; if the second lead is the queen—the lower of the indifferent cards—*more* than the minimum of five are shown.

Again: The lead of 10 from king, knave, 10, when 10 forces queen, or both ace and queen. The leader then remains with two high indifferent cards. If the second lead is the king, the minimum is shown—knave and one small card only; if the second lead is knave, the lower of the indifferent cards, the leader still holds king and at least two small ones, *i. e.*, *more* than the minimum numerical strength.

The student will note that if the 10 brings out the ace and not the queen, the second lead must be the king irrespective of number in suit, for in this case the king, kn, are not indifferent cards, the queen being in. You can show by *play* as well as by *lead;* for example: A leads 10; C plays qu; B plays 2; D plays 3. Now, suppose by and by D leads the suit through A; if A plays the k, he has the kn and one only; if he plays the kn, king and at least two others are marked in his hand.

From combination No. 6—queen, knave, 10, and one or more small cards, the queen is led. Again, the maxim

applies ; for if the leader has the minimum, he goes on with the knave, the higher of the indifferent cards ; if more than the minimum is held, he next leads the 10.

The same directions apply to the lead of the knave of trumps from knave, 10, 9, and one or more small cards. With the minimum, the 10 follows the knave; with more than the minimum, the 9 is the second lead. In plain suits, the fourth best is led from this combination. *See* analysis of leads.

There are six combinations of high cards, from which a high card is led—followed, in some cases—by a high card, that do not come under the application of the third maxim; although in each combination the leader remains, after the first lead, with high indifferent cards, *i. e.*, cards in sequence with the card led, and hence of equal trick-making value. Here they are in tabular form:—

FROM	LEAD	THEN
Ace, king, queen, knave only.....	k	kn
Ace, queen, knave, 10 only.....	ace	10
King, queen, knave, 10 only.....	k	10
King, queen, knave, and *one* small....	k	kn
Queen, knave, 10, 9 only.....	qu	9
Knave, 10, 9, 8 (trumps only).....	kn	8

In all except the tierce to king combination, the leads —first and second—not only show the *exact* numerical strength, but the exact cards that are held. The tierce to king combination is led the same as the quart major; the rank of the cards demands it. If partner has not the ace it will usually be played upon the king, and when the leader next leads the knave, queen and one

small card (smaller than the 10) are proclaimed. If the king and knave both win, the lead is then shown to be from the ace, king, queen, knave (if the ace is not with third hand).

Note that these six combinations are all of *exactly four cards*, and if a low card is added to each, then the third maxim applies.

Analysis of Leads in Detail.

Note 1.—By "original lead" is meant the original lead of the original leader of the hand. The leads given may be made by any player, at any stage of the hand, but they apply with greater force to the first lead of all.

Note 2.—When the second lead is given, it is assumed that no one has renounced to the first round. Holding up is not provided for, as: A leads the kn from k, qu, kn, and two small, and the knave wins, ace is supposed to be with B.

Note 3.—Trumps are led the same as plain suits when not otherwise directed.

Suits Headed by Ace.

Suits headed by the ace may be divided into five distinct combinations, aside from suits of five or more where the ace is led with or without high cards.

1. *Quart Major Combination.*

The distinctive feature of this combination is the four

court cards, and the leads—first and second—are shown in tabular form.

* In the above combinations, and in all that are to follow, the cards to the left of the "—" form the base or root of the combination; the cards to the right of the "—" show simply the numerical strength and affect (as a rule) the second leads only. In each instance the cards to the right of the "—" will be of the highest rank permissible not to affect in any way the leads, either in trumps or plain suit. Combinations which are affected by the rank of the cards that may be placed to the right of the "—" will be given under the head of the "ace combinations."

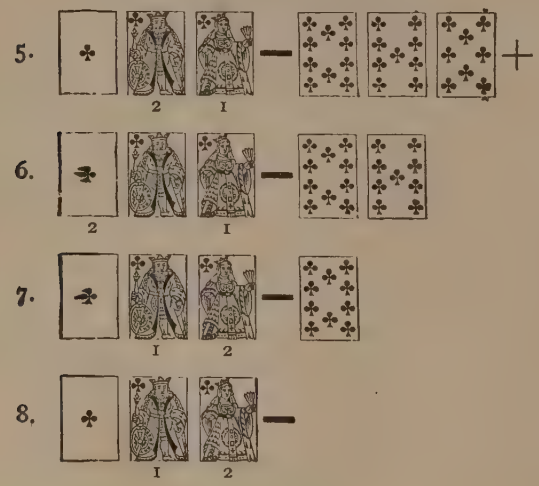
In No. 1, for instance, the 10, 9, 8 are used, but these three cards may be any of three of all the cards from the 10 to the deuce inclusive—and not in any way affect the first or second leads. The plus (+) sign following

No. 1 indicates that this combination may be of greater numerical strength—eight, nine or more cards. The digits "1" and "2" signify first and second leads in *plain suits.*

† When the plus sign is not used, the suit must be of the exact numerical strength given—as in No. 3 there must be just five cards. The only change that can be made in this combination (3) and not affect the leads is to substitute some *one* card in place of the 10, as the 9, 7 or 4, etc.

Remark :—The combinations Nos. 1 to 4 are so strong that the lead is the same in either trumps or plain suits. The inference to be drawn from the high-card leads will be found in detail in the tables of inferences (pp. 83–84).

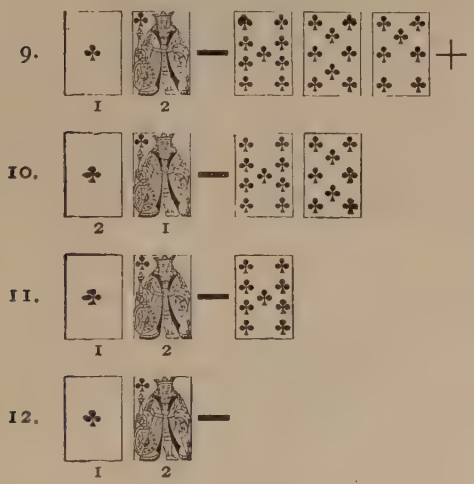
2. *Tierce Major Combination.*



Remark :—With more than four in suit the queen is

led; with four or less the king. With No. 8 the lead may be termed forced, as you do not open (from choice), as an original lead, from less than four cards. In trumps (No. 8) lead ace, then king, then queen.

3. *Ace King Combination.*



Remark:—Holding ace, king and any three (or more) below the queen, lead ace; with four in suit lead king; with less than four—*i. e.*, a forced lead—lead ace then king. In trumps, combinations 9 and 10, you lead the fourth-best—with seven in all, however, the lead is the same as in plain suits. Nos. 11 and 12 are forced leads. In rare cases, holding ace, king only, you sometimes lead them in preference to opening a *very weak* plain suit. In case you do, lead ace, then king, and the fall to the two rounds in conjunction with the cards partner may hold of the suit, will generally enable him to read that you

have not led from five or more, and he will know that you are playing for his hand—not for your own.

4. *Four-Card Combination.*

13.

Remark :—The lead of the ace, then 10, marks this exact holding. If any cards are added to the suit the second lead is then the knave, as it is of more importance to show five or more in suit than it is to show the 10.

5. *Ace, Queen, Knave Combination.*

14.

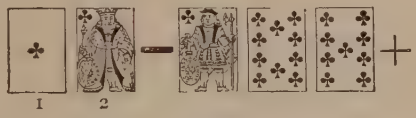
15.

16.

Remark :—Holding ace, queen, knave and two or more small (including the 10 as a small card) lead ace, then knave, showing the queen and at least two small ; with four in suit lead queen after ace, and with less than four (as a forced lead) lead from the ace down

6. *Ace Combinations.*

There are many combinations—all suits of five or more, ace at the head—from which the ace is led, and these all come under rule No. 2. Table of leads No. 1, (p. 23). There follow, however, some special combinations which call for particular attention, owing to the character of the high sequences and tenaces which may be with the ace—and yet the ace be led.

17. 

18.

19.

20.

21.

22.

23.

24.

Remark :—These will be examined *seriatim :* (17.) This is an ace king combination (*see* Nos. 9–12), but the strong tierce to knave sequence to the right of the "—" renders it uncommonly strong. In trumps lead king—if you mean to change the suit with the idea of finessing on the return—if not lead ace, then king, then 9. (18–19.) In trumps or plain suits lead king, and, if expedient, change the suit and wait for the return. (20.) You will rarely, if ever, be forced to lead from this combination. If expedient change the suit, with the idea of finessing kn upon the return. (21–22.) Holding either of these two combinations—four cards only in suit—lead 9, in either trumps or plain suit. With five or more, lead ace, then 9—if the fall to the ace warrants it. (23.) If forced to open from ace, kn and one small, lead small retaining tenace. You may under certain circumstances be justified in the lead of the knave in the hope of making two tricks in the suit. (24.) Holding ace and four, five or even six very small cards you may lead fourth-best, if strong in trumps.

In all other suits of five or more cards headed by the ace, lead ace then fourth-best. In trumps lead fourth-best unless with seven in all—then lead ace.

SUITS HEADED BY THE KING.

Suits headed by the king may be divided into four combinations as follows :—

7. *Quart to King Combination.*

25.

Remark :—The lead of king then 10, like the lead of ace then 10, marks the queen and knave and shows exactly four in suit.

8. *Tierce to King Combination.*

26.

27.

28.

29.

Remark :—With a tierce to king, five or more in suit, the knave is led, with four the king, and with less than four lead king, then kn and show the queen. In trumps (No. 29) lead k, then qu, then kn and show no more.

9. *King Queen Combination.*

30.

31.

32.

Remark :—Holding king, queen and three or more small (below the knave) lead queen ; if it wins, follow with fourth-best counting from and including the queen. With four in suit lead king, if it wins, then lowest ; if the king loses, you, of course, next follow with the queen. If forced to lead from king, queen only, or king, queen and one small, lead king then queen.

10. *King, Knave, Ten Combination.*

33.

34.

35.

(But *see* Appendix A.)

Remark :—Holding king, knave, 10, with or without others lead the 10, even if the nine is in hand. If the 10 forces the play of queen, or ace and queen, follow with knave, if five or more are in hand ; with king, if less than five. If 10 forces ace and not queen, you must next lead the king irrespective of numerical strength. If the ten wins the trick, follow with original fourth-best.

From all other suits headed by king lead fourth-best.

SUITS HEADED BY THE QEEEN.

There are two combinations headed by the queen.

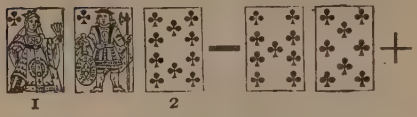
11. *Quart to Queen Combination.*

(But *see* Appendix A.)

36.

Remark :—The lead of queen then 9 proclaims the kn, 10 only, and is similar in principle to ace then 10 ; king then 10 ; each heralds an exact holding.

12. *Tierce to Queen Combination.*

37. 

38.

39.

(But *see* Appendix A.)

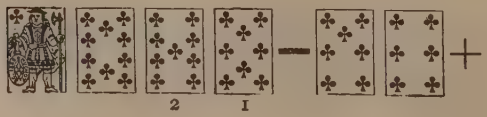
Remark :—With tierce to queen, with or without others, the queen is led. Holding five or more follow with the 10 ; less than five lead from the queen down.

From all other suits headed by the queen lead fourth-best.

SUITS HEADED BY THE KNAVE.

The knave lead from the head of a sequence, like the old lead of the 10, is now abandoned. (*See* p. 22). Below is given the quart to knave combination showing the lead and follow.

13. *Quart to Knave Combination.*

40. 

41.

42.

43.

Remark :—In trumps the kn is led at the head of a sequence, as partner is justified in finessing more deeply in trumps than in plain suits. The lead of the kn in trumps, from this combination, does not complicate the play of third hand, as it does in plain suits.

From all other strong suits not enumerated in the foregoing pages, lead fourth-best.

It is always understood that the lead of trumps may be modified by the trump card turned, the necessity for two or more rounds, the inferences drawn from the fall, the state of the score and the stage of the game.

A table of high-card leads followed by high card will be found on page 70. These leads should be studied until the student is thoroughly familiar with them in every way. The cards to the right of the "—" are given simply to show the numerical strength, and they, of course, may be any of the small cards from the 9 to the

deuce inclusive. The sign "+" signifies that the suit may be of greater numerical strength.

TABLE OF HIGH CARD LEADS.

(But *see* Appendix A.)

FROM	NO. IN SUIT.	LEAD	
		FIRST.	SECOND.
Ace, k, qu, kn—4, 3, 2 +	7	kn	qu
Ace, k, qu, kn—4, 3	6	kn	k
Ace, k, qu, kn—4	5	kn	ace
Ace, k, qu, kn—	4	k	kn
Ace, k, qu—4, 3, 2 +	6	qu	k
Ace, k, qu—4, 3	5	qu	ace
Ace, k, qu—4	4	k	qu
Ace, k—4, 3, 2 +	5	ace	k
Ace, k—4, 3	4	k	ace
Ace, qu, kn, 10—	4	ace	10
Ace, qu, kn—4, 3 +	5	ace	kn
Ace, qu, kn—4	4	ace	qu
King, qu, kn, 10—	4	k	10
King, qu, kn—4, 3, 2 +	6	kn	qu
King, qu, kn—4, 3	5	kn	k
King, qu, kn—4	4	k	kn
King, qu—4, 3, 2 +	5	qu	deuce*
King, qu—4, 3	4	k	trey†
King, kn, 10—4, 3 +	5	10	kn‡
King, kn, 10—4	4	10	k
Queen, kn, 10, 9—	4	qu	9
Queen, kn, 10—4, 3 +	5	qu	10
Queen, kn, 10—4	4	qu	kn

* Queen winning. † King winning. ‡ If 10 forces queen.

Trump Leads.

"American Leads" have revolutionized the game, and

the changes have all been in the direction of simplification.

The new order of leads from high-card combinations has, with few exceptions, done away with differences in leads between trumps and plain suits, which heretofore have proved such a stumbling-block. As original leads, aside from certain modifications rendered necessary by very unusual hands, or the rank of the card turned (*see* Special Trump Leads), trumps are led the same as plain suits, except in the following cases :—

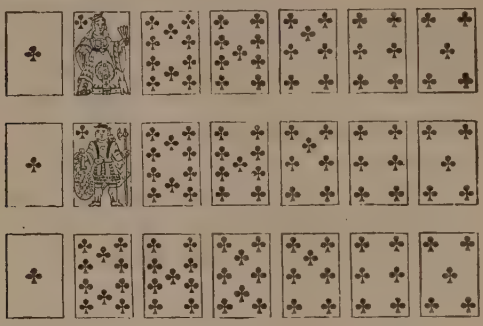
Plain Suits :—Lead king with four, ace with more than four.

Trumps :—Fourth best with less than *seven*, ace with seven or more.

Beginners, and even players of moderate experience, holding ace, king and two, three or four small trumps will at once lead ace and king. Such players play the first few rounds of the hand as though they expected to take all the tricks unaided by partner. They play their aces and kings and take as many tricks as they can, and then are at the mercy of their opponents the rest of the play. Good players finesse and underplay from the very start if necessary. They strive to so play that they may gain by finesse the *one* trick that may be made or lost.

For example :—A holds ace, k, 9, 8, 7, 6 of trumps ; he plays the two honors, he plays as though he expected to take *all* the tricks, as though he hoped to catch the qu, kn, 10 in the two rounds—leaving him with command. The good whist player reasons that there are *seven*

trumps that he does not hold and that the chances are that he will lose a trick in trumps unless his partner can win the first round for him, and consequently he leads fourth-best. Nothing can be worse than to play only your own hand—ignoring partner.



Plain Suits :—Lead fourth-best with four, ace with more than four.

Trumps :—Fourth-best with less than seven ; ace with *seven* or more.

Plain Suits or Trumps :—Lead king with four, queen with five or more, but if the 10 is not in hand, then :—

Plain Suits :—Lead king with four, qu with more than four.

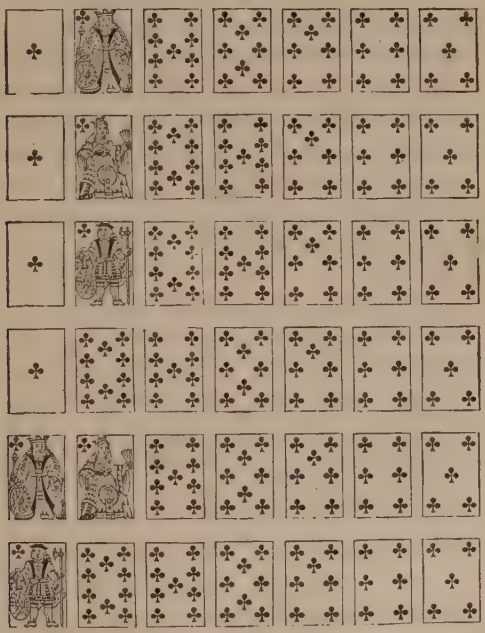
Trumps :—Fourth best with less than *seven;* qu with seven or more.

and one or more small.

Plain Suits:—Lead fourth-best.

Trumps:—Lead knave, with four in suit follow with 10, with five or more follow with 9. Holding kn, 10, 9, 8 only, lead knave then 8.

The foregoing combinations are the only ones which call for a different lead in trumps. Here they are in tabular form.



With seven in all (as above) trumps are led the same

as plain suits; with less than seven, the fourth-best is led. For example, if the 5 is dropped from each of the above (the last combination excepted), then in trumps the fourth-best would be led in each. In the last combination (kn, 10, 9, etc.), the knave is led in trumps irrespective of number, in plain suits the fourth-best.

Special Trump Leads.

The situation often demands a special trump lead. If a ruff or see-saw is imminent, or for any special reason you desire two or more rounds of trumps at all hazard, you will lead a winning high trump when you otherwise would not. The score may affect your play of trumps; suppose the score stands at 6 against you, and the opponents have four, five or six tricks home, you see the game is gone, unless a strengthening trump will save it, and you lead accordingly. The rank of the card turned often necessitates an irregular lead in trumps. Here are a few examples:—

SPECIAL TRUMP LEADS.

FROM	TURNED TO YOUR RIGHT.	LEAD
Ace, king, etc.....	Queen.	King.
Ace, queen, 10, etc..	Knave.	Queen.
King, knave, 10, etc..	Queen.	King.
King, knave, 9, etc..	10	Knave.
Queen, knave, 9, etc.	10	Queen.
Knave, 10, 8, etc.....	9	Knave.

The trump turned with partner may also modify your lead. For example, holding ace, king, queen and others, knave turned with partner, you, of course, lead small.

Irregular Original Leads.

An irregular lead is often a necessity, even as the original lead of the hand. The player always has the option of exercising his judgment in the matter of accepting an ordered lead. Irregular leads from high cards in sequence may be preferable to opening four trumps or a very weak plain suit. Here are some the least objectionable :—

Ace from—Ace, king.
King from—King, queen, knave.
King, queen, and one small.
Ten from—King, knave, 10.
Queen from—Queen, knave, 10.
Queen, knave, and one small.
Knave from—Knave, 10, 9.
Knave, 10, and one small.

You may at any time lead the king from the ace, king and three or more small, when you deem it advisable to show the ace rather than the numerical strength. You may likewise lead the king from ace, king, knave and two or more small, with the idea of changing the suit to await the return for the finesse. You may lead fourth-best from ace, king and others ; ace, and four or more small. You may refuse to open from your best suit, selecting a second-best ; as with ace, queen, 10, 2 and qu, 10 4, 3 you may open from the queen high suit. The fall to the first lead may render an irregular second lead a necessity. For instance, with ace, queen, 10 and four small, after the play of ace, you may follow with queen —drawing the knave from second hand, the king from fourth hand—establishing the suit, when the play of the

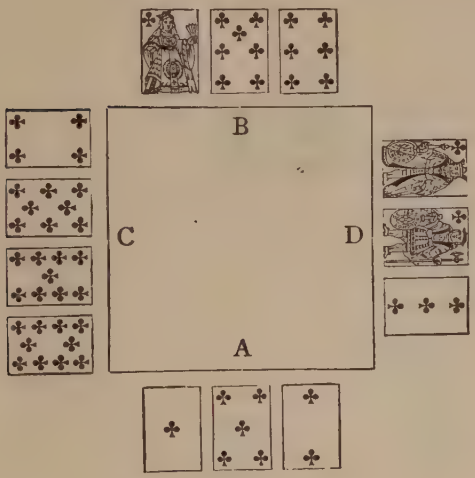
fourth-best would have permitted the king to remain in against you. These are but single instances of hundreds that might be given. On the other hand double tenaces, like the ace, queen, 10 are not good suits to open. So also any three-card suits not in sequence; or a court card and one or two small. Ace, kn, 10; ace kn, and one small; ace, 10 and another; 10 and two small and 9 and two small are all the worst possible suits to open. No singleton is ever led except the ace of trumps (as an original lead).

Forced Leads.

You are sometimes forced to open a numerically weak suit, that is a suit of less than four cards. This you will seldom have to do as the original leader of the hand, for then you must have at least one four-card suit, and even if your only four-card suit is very weak, it is generally best to open it in preference to a three-card suit. If your only four-card suit is the trump suit, it is, as a rule, best to stick to principle and lead it. But you may get in the lead after a round or two, and the character of your hand may force you to open a three-card suit. When you are forced to do this, and your three cards are in sequence, open with the highest, no matter what the cards are. It follows that if you have two three-card suits, one say, ace, qu, 10 and the other qu, kn, 10 or kn, 10, 9, you would select the one in sequence, in preference to the one of tenaces, as you will do less harm, and if you find partner with any strength in the suit, you will not lose command of the suit—at least for some rounds. If, on the other hand, you lead from the ace, qu, 10 suit, you do not have much chance of taking more than one trick in the suit, but if you have the lead come

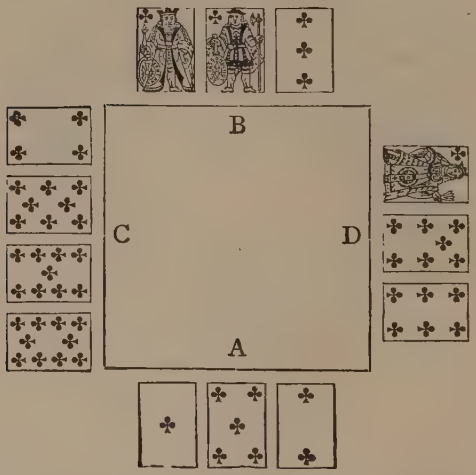
up to you, or through you, you may make two or three tricks in the suit.

If you are forced to open a three-card suit headed by ace or king, and the two other cards are small ones, such as—ace, 5, 2 ; king, 5, 2 and you have no indications as to what your partner has in the suit, you should open with a low card. If you open with a high card and partner is weak in the suit, you establish the suit for the adversaries. For example :—



Now, it matters not how A opens the suit, as the cards lay, A B can take but one trick, and either the ace or the 2 may equally deceive partner ; but there is this in favor of opening with the 2—you do not give up command, and the longer you keep the opponents from

establishing the suit against you, the more backward will be their game, and the more embarrassment you will give them. Then, again, with such a hand as you must have, to be forced to open a suit like this, you do not want the lead, and the lead of the 2 (if partner does not win the trick) throws the lead with D, and you still have command of the suit. If you lead the ace you retain the lead, and must go on with the 5, and the suit is established for the opponents. Suppose we exchange the cards of B and D and then we have :—



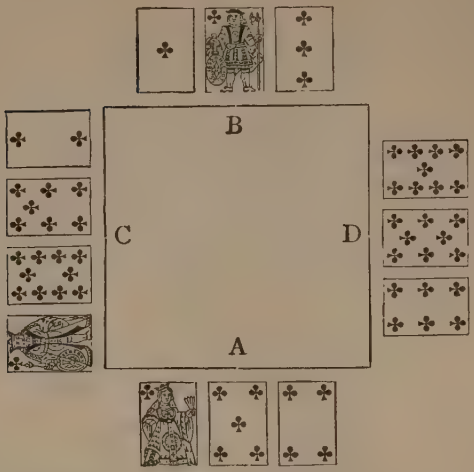
Here, if A opens with ace and follows with 5, A B take two tricks in the suit; but suppose on the other hand —

1.—A leads 2; C plays 4; B plays k; D plays 6.

2.—B leads kn, and if D does not cover, A, of course, finesses, and A B have three tricks in the suit. Transpose the cards as you may, the balance of advantage is with opening the small card; besides A, not wanting the lead with such a hand as this, throws the lead at once, and then has the probable chance of a deep finesse in the suit, if B wins the first round and returns a card like the kn, 10 or 9, and A thus keeps control of the suit until the third round.

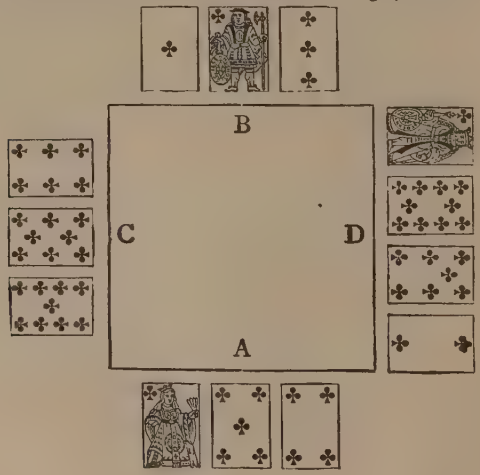
Nearly the same argument applies to the lead of a low card from king and two small. If, however, partner has shown by discard, or by negative inference, that he has strength in the suit, or if he is playing the strong game, then the case is entirely different, and you will, of course, lead him the ace or king as the case may be. If also, the two cards below the ace or king are in sequence and of some strength, as ace, 10, 9, it is generally best under all conditions to lead the high card, for if you open with the ace and follow with 10, partner will mostly be able to read it as a forced lead, and will finesse the 10, if only moderately strong in the suit.

If the three-card suit is headed by qu, kn, 10 or lower card, usually lead the highest, for these cards are of little or no value in resisting the opponents from establishing the suit, and they may strengthen partner, for if partner has fair strength the qu, kn or 10 will be of great benefit to him; if he has no strength in the suit, no play will save a trick or prevent the opponents from establishing the suit. Suppose the following :—

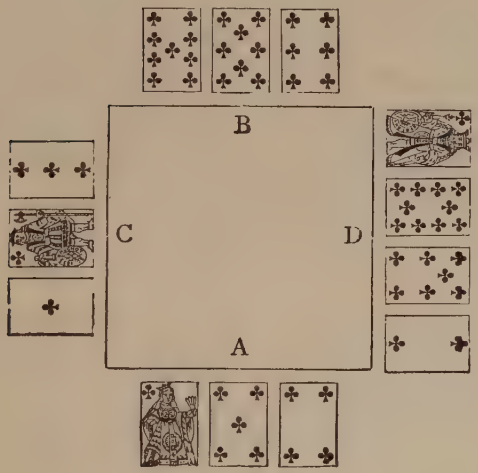


1.—A leads qu ; C plays 2 ; B plays 3 ; D plays 6.

2.—A leads 5, and no matter how C plays, A B have three tricks in the suit. On the other hand if A leads the 4, a trick is lost. If you exchange the cards of C and D no loss results from the lead of qu, as—



1.—A leads qu; C plays 6; B plays 3; D plays k, and A B make two tricks in the suit, and no play will do more. Suppose, again, that B's and C's hands are exchanged in the last example, and no loss results from the lead of the queen, as—



1.—A leads qu; C plays ace; B plays 6; D plays 2

Here, A B cannot by any play take a trick in the suit. The advantage in leading the high card here, is that it offers to partner the opportunity of finessing, and in the event of the balance of strength lying with C, a trick may

be gained; if the strength is with D no loss ensues, and even in the event of finding B with no strength, little, if any, harm is done. B's weakness in the suit, if a low card is led, is exposed on the first round, and directs the adversary to a safe finesse.

If it can be avoided do not lead from court card and one small card, especially from ace or king and one small. Avoid leading from a double tenace, or the major tenace and one small, but endeavor to play so that such suits may be led up to you. There is one combination of three cards that you do but little harm to open, and that is, k, kn, 10—open with the 10—it will not deceive partner, except, possibly, as to numerical strength. All forced leads, from three cards or less, are liable to mislead your partner, especially when there is an unusual distribution of the suit, but at times there is no other resource.

Inferences.

To play good whist it is necessary to be able to draw the important inferences with rapidity and accuracy. Every card properly played carries with it a true story, —big or little as the case may be—if you understand the story; it will require but little mental effort to recollect it as long as it is of use to you. When whist is played correctly, especially in the first few rounds of the hand, inferences may be drawn rigidly. If A leads originally the ace, then knave, B knows at once that A has the queen and at least two small. There follow in tabular form some of the most important inferences that may be drawn from high-card original leads. (Holding up and underplay cannot here be provided for, as A leads the knave and it holds the trick; he follows with queen which also wins; if B has not the ace, he draws the infer-

ence that A has ace, king and at least three small cards of the suit yet in hand, but C or D *might* have the ace, and A, king and three small.)

TABLE OF INFERENCES.—NO. 1.

LEAD.		INFERENCES.		
FIRST.	SECOND.	SHOWS.	DENIES.	NO. IN SUIT.
Ace.	King.	.....	Queen.	5 + ‡
Ace.	Queen.	Knave.	King.	4
Ace.	Knave.	Queen.	King.	5 +
Ace.	10	Qu and kn.	King.	4
Ace.	9	Qu. or kn and 10	King.	5 +
Ace.	4th	Two higher.	K & qu & kn.	5 +
King.	ace	.....	Queen.	4
King.†	qu	Ace.	Knave.	4
King.*	qu	Two small.	Knave.	4
King.†	kn	Ace and qu.	.....	4
King.*	kn	Queen.	.....	4
King.	10	Qu and kn.	Ace.	4
King.	9	Qu and 10	Ace and kn.	4
King.	4th	Queen.	Ace and kn.	4

‡ 5 or more. † King winning. * King losing.

TABLE OF INFERENCES.—NO. II.

LEAD.		INFERENCES.		
FIRST.	SECOND.	SHOWS.	DENIES.	NO. IN SUIT.
Queen	Ace.	King.	Knave.	5
Queen *	King.	Ace.	Knave.	6+‡
Queen †	King.	.....	Knave.	5+‡
Queen	Knave.	10	Ace, king, 9	4
Queen	10	Knave.	Ace, king.	5+
Queen	9	Knave, 10	Ace, king.	4
Queen	8	King, 10, 9	Ace, knave.	5+
Queen	Small	K and two higher	Ace, knave.	5+
Knave	Ace.	King, queen.	.....	5
Knave *a*	King.	Ace, queen.	.....	6
Knave *b*	King.	Queen.	Ace.	5
Knave *a*	Queen.	Ace, king.	.....	7+
Knave *b*	Queen.	King.	Ace.	6+
Ten *c*	King.	Knave.	Ace, queen.	4
Ten *c*	Knave.	King.	Ace, queen.	5+
Ten *d*	4th.	King, knave.	Ace, queen.	4+

‡ 6 or more. * Queen winning. † Queen losing.
a Knave winning, and ace not in third hand. *b* Knave losing, or ace in third hand. *c* Ten forcing queen. *d* Ten winning.

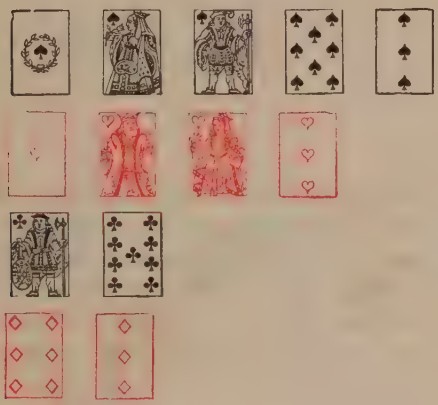
Example Hands.

As a review of the foregoing analysis of the play of the first hand, a few example hands are given, together with comments. Some exceptional hands are included, which justify irregular leads. The leads given in the analysis of the examples are supposed to be original leads and a small card is assumed to be turned. There is no score.

NO. 1 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

This is a very simple hand. The student will observe that there is but one four card suit—the d—and that the proper way to open the hand is with the ace, follow with 10, and show the qu and kn exactly.

NO. 2 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



Here is a hand in which there are two strong suits, one of four and one of five cards. The heart suit is very strong in the matter of high cards, but the spade suit has high cards and great numerical strength. Open the spade suit with ace and follow with kn, thus denying the king and showing the queen and at least two others.

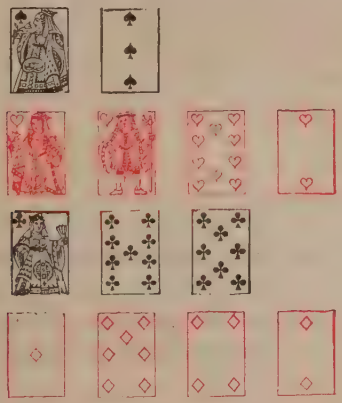
NO. 3 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

The heart is evidently the suit here; open with k, and then change the suit, leading the 3 of diamonds. Partner will read you with the ace of hearts and probably kn also, and if he has the queen, he will return it to you at the proper time, if he gets in; if he returns a small card you know the qu of hearts is against you and you may finesse kn, if you deem it best.

NO. 4 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

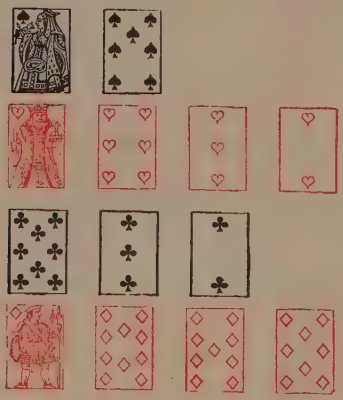
Here are three four-card suits, but it is easy to decide to open the spade suit. Lead the k ; if it wins follow with the 7, showing queen and *one* card higher than the second lead.

NO. 5 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



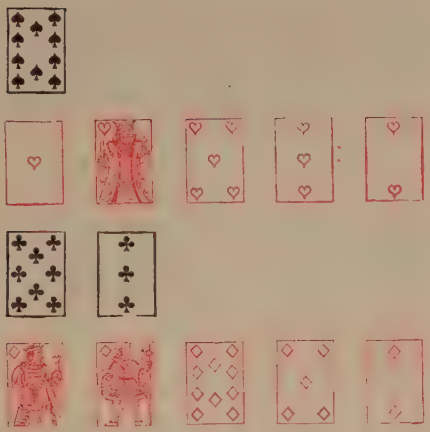
There are two four-card suits in this hand. The d suit is headed by the ace, but aside from this the suit is very weak. The strong sequence of 10 to queen renders the heart suit decidedly the better suit to open—lead qu, if it wins, follow with the kn, showing the 10 and *one* more. **(But *see* Appendix A.)**

NO. 6 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



A suit which contains a sequence of three medium high cards is always a better suit to open than a suit headed with a single high card, even though it be the ace. Open d with the 8; for the second lead play kn and show the 10, 9 only.

NO. 7 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

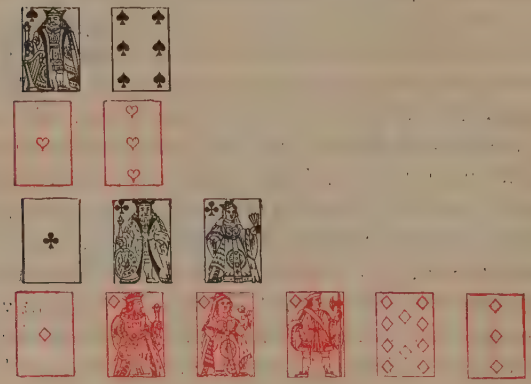


It is open for some consideration here. Two five-card suits, and both strong. The diamond suit is selected for two reasons; first, as a matter of information to partner, the 10 d will mark the k, kn and if partner has either ace or qu, the suit will be established on the first or second round. Second, if the heart suit be opened, leading the ace, and then the king, the suit is then worthless. If you withhold this suit it may be opened up to you by the adversary, and you may capture a court card with your king; if you lead out ace and king, small cards will most likely fall upon them and the adversaries may be left with control. Lead 10 d, and the follow depends upon the fall, for if the 10 forces the ace and not qu, you must, if you continue the suit, go on with k. If the 10 forces the qu or both ace and qu, then the k, kn are of indifferent value, and you go on with kn—showing five at least in suit. If the 10 wins the trick, follow with the 5. (*See* Appendix A.)

NO. 8 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

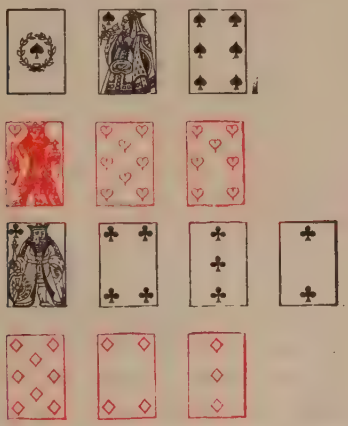
This hand is different in character from any of the preceding ones. There is no high-card combination, and consequently the opening must be with a fourth-best card. The spade suit is the longest and strongest suit—open with the 5, the fourth-best card.

NO. 9 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



Here is a very exceptional hand, and to make the most of it requires exceptional treatment. There is a great suit of diamonds—six tricks in it barring trumps. The tierce major in trump only, but this insures three rounds. If you open the diamond suit it may be trumped the first round. The best thing to do is to draw three rounds of trumps—leading from the ace down. If partner has the long trumps, a great game must follow, if with the opponents, the diamonds will force their play. After three rounds of trumps open the d suit conventionally—with the kn and follow with the king.

NO. 10 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



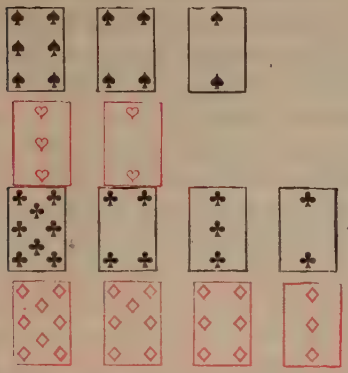
This hand differs from any yet examined from the fact that the only four-card suit is the trump suit. You cannot do better than to open with the 2 of trumps. It will not deceive partner; he will read that you most likely

have three cards of each suit and four trumps. If he wins the first round he will not return the trump unless it suits his hand to have trumps come out. As a rule when your only four-card suit—or rather when you have no plain suit of more than three cards—stick to principle and lead the trump suit.

NO. 11 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

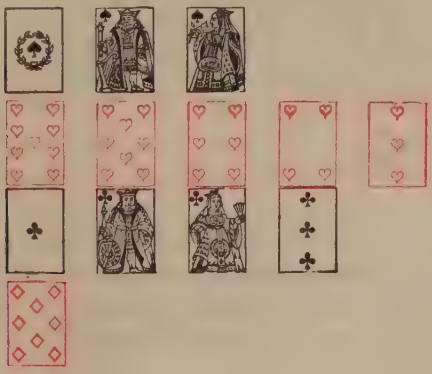
Here, again, is a very exceptional hand. Strength in all the suits. The only singleton that is ever led is the ace of trumps. It can deceive partner, but for the moment; for, if you lead it and stop, you say to partner, "I am strong in all the suits and can take care of them, almost unaided, get out the trumps, draw two for one, and then lead me the best cards you hold, without any regard to conventions, I'm responsible for this hand." Open with ace of trumps, follow with king of hearts, then lead the k d, if it wins follow with the deuce.

NO. 12 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



This is a "Yarborough"; a term used to characterize a hand at whist in which there is no card higher than a 9. It is a very poor hand, but this is no reason why it should not be played properly, the odd card may depend upon its proper play; its improper play may lose a game. It is infinitely more to your credit to save a trick by good play of a hand like this than to take all thirteen tricks with a hand that is invincible. Simply play the hand conventionally, opening with the 3 d.

NO. 13 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



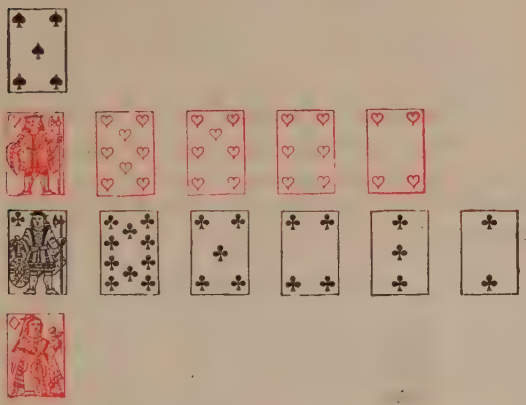
This is a hand over which there has been a great deal of discussion, not as to which card should be led, when the suit has been decided upon, but as to which suit should be opened. This is a point to be marked. The student will observe that to know which *card* to lead is usually a comparatively easy matter, but that at times, in exceptional hands, the greatest whist minds diverge—they differ in their judgment as to which *suit* to select to open. This is one of the many fine points the whist writers never reach. The long whist player—where honors do not count, and seven points are game—would at once select the heart suit as the one to open, leading, of course, the fourth-best card.

NO. 14 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

Players addicted to the pernicious habit of leading from short suits and singletons would here delight in the lead of the 3 of d. It is true that this lead might result in more tricks than the proper lead of the fourth-best

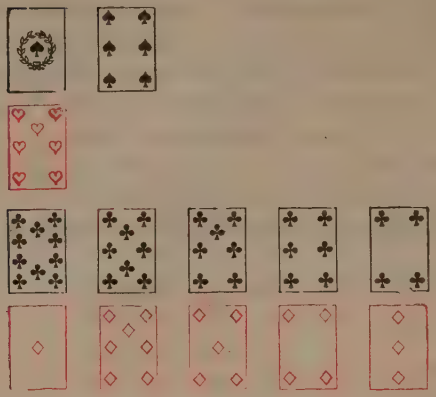
spade, but in the majority of cases such leads must lose as against the long-suit play. By the lead of a singleton as the first lead of all you deceive partner and may wreck his hand as well as your own. Besides you disturb his confidence in your reliability. If the object is to ruff with the small trumps, the chances for doing so are just as good if you wait, as some one *must* be long in the suit and will lead it, and when led, your poverty in the suit may not be suspected the first round.

NO. 15 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



This is an exceptional hand. With six trumps it is nearly always right to lead them, but here, aside from the numerical strength in h, the hand has no strength, and the object in drawing the trumps at the very start is not apparent. The safest play is perhaps the fourth-best heart. If partner wins the first round he will most likely open either d or s, and in either event the play will enable him to read your probable holding early in the play of the hand.

NO. 16 (CLUBS TRUMPS).



This is an exceptional hand. The fourth-best d is no doubt the safest opening. If you part with the ace of d the suit is nearly worthless. Holding ace and four small cards, do not, as a rule, lead the ace in conjunction with numerical strength in trumps.

NO. 17 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

Open with the k d—showing partner your suit and then the 6 of trumps.

NO. 18 (CLUBS TRUMPS).

Here, again, is an exceptional hand. The only four card suit (aside from the trump suit) is very weak, but there is nothing better than to stick to rule and open it. There is no other suit to be considered—except the spade suit, and if this suit is opened it must be with k, then queen, and if you are forced to discontinue this suit, you will then be driven to the diamond suit, and nothing will have been gained. Besides you run the risk of establishing the spade suit for the opponents. It is hardly ever good play to choose a three-card suit from which to make the first lead of all—usually stick to principle and open your four-card suit even if very weak.

The First Card.

The first card led is the index to the hand—the prologue to the play, and the one who utters it should do so in such a way as not to confuse and render ambiguous the entire performance. This is the card that puts the quartette to thinking. Partner says—"What has he got?" and at once formulates a line of attack or defense consistent with the character of his hand and the rank of the card led. If he is weak, and the card led is indicative of weakness—defensive tactics are adopted. If, on the other hand, he is strong and the first card implies strength, the line of play is aggressive. It follows that the card you first lead should not be selected without due deliberation, and that it should be as informatory as the character of your hand will permit. The first lead of all will rarely, if ever, be other than conventional, and will as often represent the best suit of the hand. It matters not that the adversaries also read the play.

When you are to lead for the first time—not being the original leader, you usually open your strong suit, and exactly in the same manner as though you were the first hand of all to lead; but your responsibility is not so great, besides the fall to the previous tricks may be such that you may open with any card you see fit, the reason for it being apparent from the play. It is the first card of all that should almost always be conventional, *i. e.*, it should be from your best suit—if a high card, it should proclaim the holding; if a low card, it should be the fourth-best. After the first card is thrown, all conventionalities stand second to the fall of the cards, and any player is justified in leading any card, no matter how unconventional it may be. Irregular play under such circumstances will not usually deceive partner,

nor even the opponents, for in order to make your irregular play justifiable, the fall must be such that it will place all the players upon guard and they will read your play subject to the previous fall. What would be false and unconventional play as an original play, under such circumstances, becomes, in fact, conventional play ; in other words it is conventional to lead irregularly when the fall renders it expedient to do so.

For the first lead of all a singleton is never led, except occasionally the ace of trumps. No two-card suit is opened originally, except in rare cases, you may open from ace, king only—leading ace then king. In an exceptional hand a three-card suit of high cards in sequence may be opened, but even this is rarely best. In the majority of cases the first card will represent a suit of four or more cards ; if a high-card combination, the holding will be proclaimed ; if a low card is led, it announces three higher cards.

For further instruction on the leads—first and second—the student is directed to the chapter—Counting the Hands. The examples therein given should be thoroughly examined. If the student is not familiar with all the leads—first and second,—he will not be prepared to understand the analyses of second and third-hand play which are to follow. His knowledge of the leads as set forth in the tables, and his understanding of the inferences to be drawn from the various leads, must not be superficial. The student should not pass this point until his examination of the principles so far treated is comprehensive and exhaustive.

CHAPTER III.

SECOND HAND.

The older writers did not give to the play of second hand the consideration it merits. There are more tricks lost by the average player in the play of second hand than in any other position. The correct play of second hand is the most difficult of any at the table, and very much depends upon its skillful management.

Play Your Lowest Card Second Hand.

This is a good general rule, but the exceptions are many and very important. The play of second hand has been very materially affected by what is known as American Leads. The play of the fourth-best card, and the improved order of leads from high-card combinations, enable second hand to count the cards, draw inferences, and finesse accordingly. Second hand play is subject in a material degree to the trumps in hand, the card turned, the score, etc. That which may be proper play if weak in trumps, may be bad play if strong in them. You may often make a great game by a well-judged finesse, and you must not forget when planning your finesse second hand, that if your finesse fails you are then last player to the next trick, which should be an advantage to you; if it is not, then your finesse lacked at least one of the

justifications for finessing second hand. Third hand is supposed to put up his best card, if needed, and you must consider the play of a high card second hand very carefully or you will weaken your hand to no purpose. The card led, in conjunction with the cards you hold, may enable you to divine whether third hand is likely to finesse or put up his best card. Should you think his position will not justify him in finessing, you may finesse, for, if you judge the card he may play will in any event be higher than your best card, you gain to the extent of your finesse. The conditions change at every step, and your play is subject to all the modifications arising from previous play. You must distinguish between conventional and forced leads, and you cannot be too careful about trumping second hand; it is nearly always dangerous, and may be very disastrous.

A single card in your hand will often enable you to detect a forced lead. The original lead of the hand will, except in rare cases, be conventional, but, later in play, forced or irregular leads, are common. If you hold ace or 10, the 9 led, the lead is forced; or king or kn—10 led, k or qu—kn led, the lead is irregular. If you hold a fourchette to any high card led, the lead is forced. If an 8 or any low card is led, and you hold such cards as render it impossible for the leader to have three cards higher than the one led, you know, of course, that the lead is forced, and so on; in a thousand ways the cards tell their story. You must, likewise, be on the alert for under play, and all manner of finesse. One of the finest points in whist is to throw the lead at a critical moment in the strategy of the play. Playing through the strong hand up to the weak is a device you must be prepared to meet. All these things, and many more, must be taken into consideration in playing second hand.

Exceptions to Lowest Card Second Hand.

1.—With three in suit, two in sequence, you should generally play the lower of the sequence cards.

For example: C holding kn, 10, 2, the 3 led, plays 10—not deuce.

2.—With three cards in sequence, and one or more small, you play lowest of sequence. For instance, you hold ace, k, qu, 6 you play qu second hand.

3.—When you can count the cards in leader's hand.

As: A leads 7,—C holding ace, qu, kn, 9, gives A the k, 10, 8, 7, and knows that the 9 must win the trick. The play of the kn, though in sequence, would be bad play. Had A led the 4, C must have put up kn.

4.—When you hold a fourchette.

You have a fourchette when you hold the card next higher and next lower than the card led; as 10 led, you holding kn, 9. To a conventional original lead of a high card you cannot hold a fourchette; but they are common when the lead is forced. Holding a fourchette is notice to you that the lead is irregular, and you play accordingly.

5.—When you hold a double tenace.

As with ace, qu, 10, and others you play qu—usually, or finesse the 10—and not a small card.

6.—When you wish to ask for trumps.

If you desire to call for trumps, you play an *unnecessarily* high card—say, the trey to ace led, and then the deuce to the king. If you wish to call, and also cover with one of two or more cards in sequence, you must cover with the higher of the two in sequence. For example, holding kn, 10, 4, you play the kn, not the 10, if you wish to call. (*See* The Call.)

7.—When you wish to get in for a particular purpose.

You may attempt to win the trick by the play of a high card, which you otherwise would not have played. Suppose partner has asked for trumps, you may hazard a play for possession of lead ; likewise, if he has shown a desire to get in, and your hand is of such a nature that you cannot lead him a card to mutual advantage, you may underplay with the view of putting him in.

8.—When you can take the trick and still hold command.

As, holding ace, king, and others, you play king.

9.—With ace and others, a court card led.

You usually cover a court card led, holding ace and others, as with ace, queen, and others, knave led, play ace.

10.—When a suit can go round but once, or unlikely to run twice.

As with ace and six, or more small, you play ace irrespective of the rank of the card led.

11.—With but two or three cards below the knave.

A higher one than the one led may be of some service. For instance, holding 10, 4 the 8 led, you may play 10 ; or with 8, 5, the 7, or 6 led, you cover. Such play should not be mistaken for a call, for if second hand plays first a higher and then a lower card, and the higher card covers the card led, as the 10 on the 8, the 8 on the 7, etc., partner will not lead trumps from this play alone, but should read the play as a probable cover. To be sure, it may happen that second hand may wish to call with such holding, but this contingency will occur less frequently than will the necessity for covering. The call second hand must be absolute, and the card played, palpably *unnecessarily* high, to constitute a call.

12. When you hold a singly-guarded court card.

As the 9 or 8 led, you hold k and small—play k.

13.—When you wish to cover the card led, with the idea of saving a high card for partner, as with k, 9, and one small, you play 9 to 8 led.

Below, in tabulated form, is the proper play for second hand. These tables apply with more force to the original opening of the hand. When no qualification is stated, the play is the same in trump as in plain suits. A low card is supposed to be turned. In the following tables, Nos. 1, 2, 3, the word "small" designates a card in rank below the 7.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO. 1.

SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
ace, k, qu—with or without others...	any	qu (a)
ace, k, kn—with or without others...	any	k
ace, k—and two or more small.....	any	k (b)
ace, k—and one small.....	small	small (c)
ace, qu, kn—with or without others..	any	kn
ace, qu, 10 only.....	small	10
ace, qu, 10—and one or more small..	small	qu (d)
ace, qu—with or without others.....	kn	ace
ace, qu—with or without others.....	10	qu
ace, qu—and others.....	small	small (e)
ace, kn, 10—and one or more small..	small	small (f)
ace, kn—and one or more small.....	k or qu	ace (g)
ace—and others.....	k, qu or kn	ace (h)
ace—and six or more small.....	small	small (i)
ace—and less than seven in suit.....	small	small

(a) It is understood that when second hand can count the leader's hand he plays accordingly; as here if the 7 is led, second hand holding ace, k, qu and 8—plays the 8 and not the qu. So, also, if in trumps, the 7 led, the 10 turned with fourth hand, second hand holding k, qu, kn and deuce, will throw the deuce and not the kn. These obvious exceptions will not be referred to again.

(b) Play small in trumps unless qu is led, or you are desirous of stopping the lead.

(c) With just three in suit to a small card led, the small card is

the better play in the majority of cases, and nearly always if strong enough in trumps to lead them. It is an even chance partner will win the first round, and you do not propose to have the suit go three times before trumps are led, as you get in on the second round of the suit; besides partner is as likely as your left hand opponent to be the one who is short of the suit. In trumps play small unless you desire the lead for special reasons.

(d) If you are strong in trumps play 10. In trumps play 10.

(e) With six in suit play qu; with seven in all, play ace.

(f) In trumps play 10, as leader may have k, qu.

(g) It is sometimes good play to pass the k or qu holding ace, kn, etc., but it is generally best to throw the ace.

(h) In trumps pass, unless you wish to stop the lead.

(i) In trumps play small. Pass even the second round if you have a good hand. You may play ace in plain suit, if weak in trumps.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO. 2.

SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
k, qu, kn—with or without others	any	kn
k, qu, 10—and one or more	small	qu
k, qu—and others	small	qu (a)
k, qu—and others	kn	qu (b)
k, kn, 10—with or without others	small	10 (c)
k, kn, 9—and one or more	small	small (d)
k, kn—and one or more	small	small
k, kn—only	small	kn
k, kn—with or without others	9	kn
k and one small	9	k
k and others	9	small
k and one small	small	small (e)

(a) Generally play qu; in trumps, a low card.

(b) The lead is forced, and you may sometimes pass to advantage.

(c) In trumps the 10 should nearly always be played; in plain suits generally, but you may often play small with advantage.

(d) To the 7 or 6 led you may sometimes throw the 9 to advantage, especially if desirous of getting the lead.

(e) In trumps generally play k. If the lead is in answer to a call, play small, as ace is to your left. If you have the k turned, or if the ace is up to your right, throw k. Aside from these exceptions there is but little advantage in favor of the play of king. And to a small card led, it is often best to play small, as it does not expose you to probable adverse finessing.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO. 3.

SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
qu, kn, 10—with or without others	small	10
qu, kn—and others	any	small
qu, kn—and one small	small	kn (a)
qu—and one small	10 or 9	qu
qu—and more than one small	10 or 9	small
qu—and one small	small	small (b)
kn, 10, 9—with or without others	small	9
kn, 10—and others	small	small
kn, 10—and one small	small	10 (c)
kn—and one or two small	9	kn
kn—and more than two small	9	small
kn—and one small	small	small (d)
ten, 9—and others	small	small
ten, 9—and one small	small	9
nine, 8—and others	small	small
nine, 8—and one small	small	8

(a) See page 108.
(b) In trumps play queen. (*See* note to king and one small.)
(c) See page 109.
(d) In trumps generally play kn. (*See* page 109.)

It is possible for situations to occur, in which the order of play, as tabulated, might not be the best; but tables have nothing to do with exceptional situations.

When you have an exceptional hand you must meet it with exceptional play, and the player who possesses the better whist perception, will be successful. Almost as much depends on knowing when to depart from the rules as in knowing when to follow them. A hundred volumes might be filled with rules, examples, and instructions, and still fall short of the possibilities of the game. The resources and scope of whist defy complete analysis.

Analysis of Play of Second Hand in Detail.

Holding three high cards—ace, k, qu, or k, qu, kn —The lowest in sequence is unquestionably the play, and there can be no finesse except in rare cases.

Queen, kn., 10 and one or more—There may be a chance for a finesse, if a small card is led (plain suit), for either ace or king—possibly both—lie over you and your 10 may be sacrificed. In trumps the 10 should go, and usually in plain suits also, but you may *sometimes* finesse with profit.

Knave, 10, 9, and others.—This case is somewhat analogous to the preceding one. In trumps play 9; but in plain suits you may finesse to advantage.

Ace, k, kn.—Here the king should go in either plain suits or trumps.

Ace, qu, kn and others—You are too strong for finesse here—play kn.

Ace, qu, 10—With no others play ten, either trump or suit. With others, the qu should usually be played. With *one* more you may finesse 10 either in suit or trumps, if the character of your hand and position warrant it.

King, kn, 10 and one or more—Usually play 10, but you may sometimes finesse to advantage.

Two High Cards.

Ace, k, and one small—To a low card led you will do well sometimes to pass. If weak in trumps the k had best be played, unless your hand is of such a character that by having it led up to, in case the finesse loses to third hand, you recover at once. The justification for finessing second hand, like for third in hand, must be found in the hand itself. It is the combination of cards you hold in all the suits that directs the play, in conjunction with the score, etc.

King, qu and one or more small—You should generally throw queen. If you finesse you should be strong enough in trumps to lead them, or you should have tenaces to be led up to in case the trick goes to third hand.

Queen, kn and one small—Here the object of putting on the knave is not so clear. Exhaustive analysis will show that the advantages, if any, are very slight, even if the one suit only is considered. The exposure incident to the play of kn must not be forgotten. The leader cannot have both ace and king, except in rare cases. It is about an even chance that your knave falls to one of these cards third hand. Third hand, in all likelihood, will play either ace or king if you do not play knave. If you play knave, you have exposed your hand and sacrificed your knave. If the k is in partner's hand he wins the trick; if the ace is with partner, king with leader, you —barring trumps—win first and third rounds instead of first and second. In the majority of combinations it is immaterial which you play—the knave or small card; when it is material, the advantages are slightly in favor of the play of the kn. In trumps the kn should be played, for the conditions are very different. While the kn is given as the play, with this holding, in the preced

ing table, it should be known that the advantages in its favor amount to but very little, and that a well-judged finesse with this holding may make or save a game.

Knave, 10 or 10, 9 and one small—The order for play is the lowest of sequence. There are no disadvantages here, and there are cases where loss will ensue if you finesse—you should generally play one of the sequence.

From the foregoing it will be seen that the advantages in favor of the play of the high card, second hand, holding ace, k ; qu, kn ; or kn, 10 and one small, are very slight and that against this stand the exposure resulting from the play and the adverse finessing incident thereto. This frequently more than offsets the meagre advantage. Keep this in mind, and when your hand warrants any finesse, do not hesitate to play the small card with these holdings.

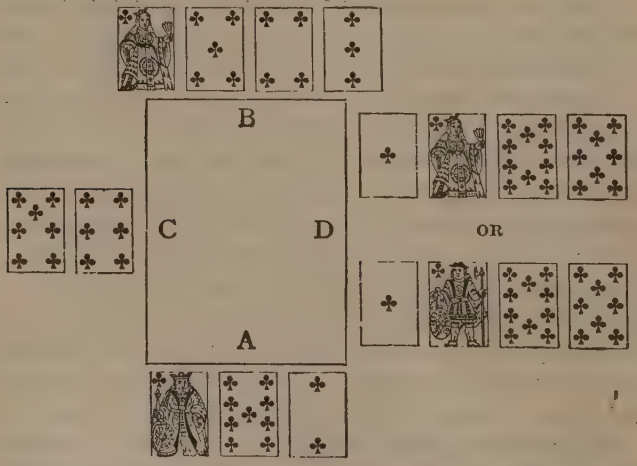
One High Card.

Holding king, queen, or knave and one small card second hand, to a small card led—plain suits—the order for play is the small card. As a matter of making tricks it is almost an even thing, but it is conventional to play the small card unless you desire the lead, or wish to call for trumps, and partner so reads the play. In trumps the honor is often thrown, as the margin in favor of the play of the high card is greater than in plain suits, owing to the more backward play of trumps by leader. Here, also, some discretion is necessary, and it is often best to throw the small card. Whether the lead of trumps is voluntary or in response to a call, has much to do with your play, and the rank of the card turned may influence your play. Cover no honor with an honor, holding but a single honor, except you put on ace. For instance: Do not put qu on kn, nor k on qu or kn unless you hold

a fourchette, or wish to force at once the higher cards. (*But see The Play of the Second Hand to Forced Leads, page* 157.)

Special Plays for the Second Hand when the 8 is Led.

The 8 and 7 are cards of high rank—as fourth-best cards. When 8 or 7 is led, second hand, holding certain combinations, is enabled to count the leader's cards in the suit with accuracy. It will often occur, when the 8 or 7 is led, that the second hand can determine the exact combination from which the lead is made, or it may be that he can read that the lead must be from one of two, three, or four combinations. When the second hand can do this, it not infrequently directs him to a safe finesse, or justifies him in covering the card led, for the purpose of saving a high, or master card, for partner. There follow a few examples illustrating this feature of the play of the second hand, the 8 led.



D, as the original leader, leads the 8. A, holding k,

9, 2, knows that the lead is from one of the two combinations given above—and four cards only in suit. This leaves six cards to be divided between C and B. If A finds B with the qu and three others, the play of the 9 on the 8, may gain a trick. Suppose the cards lay as above, D leading from the ace, kn, 10, 8, then—

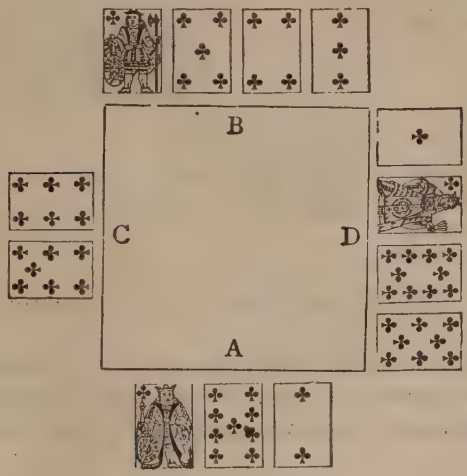
1.—D leads 8; A plays 9; C plays 6; B plays 3.

2 (C to lead).—C leads 7; B plays 4; D plays 10; A plays k.

Now, if D is forced to lead the suit, B's qu is good, and A B have three tricks in the suit. The result is the same whether B or D leads at trick two. Suppose, on the other hand, A plays as under:

1.—D leads 8; A plays 2; C plays 6; B plays qu.

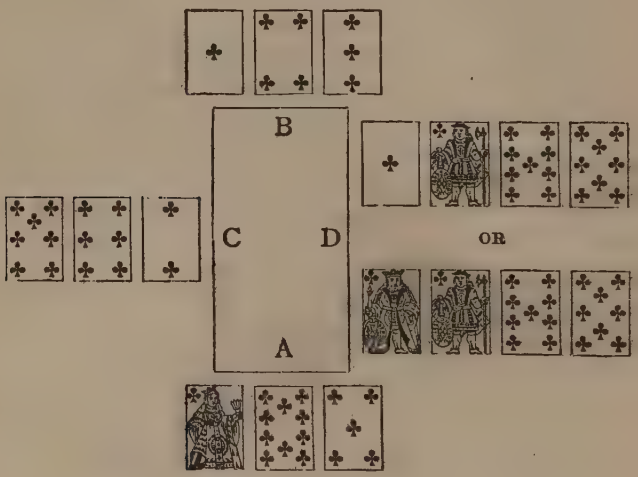
Now, no matter how or by whom the suit is next led, A B can take but two tricks in the suit. If C's and B's hands are exchanged, no harm is done by the play of the 9 by A. Suppose, again, that the lead is from the stronger combination, ace, qu, 10, 8, and the cards lie as under:



1.—D leads 8; A plays 9; C plays 6; B plays 3.

2 (C to lead).—C leads 7; B plays 4—and unless D finesses the 10, or plays the ace and leads the 10, B's kn may make. Here, again, if the hands of C and B are exchanged, A, by the play of the 9, neither gains nor loses.

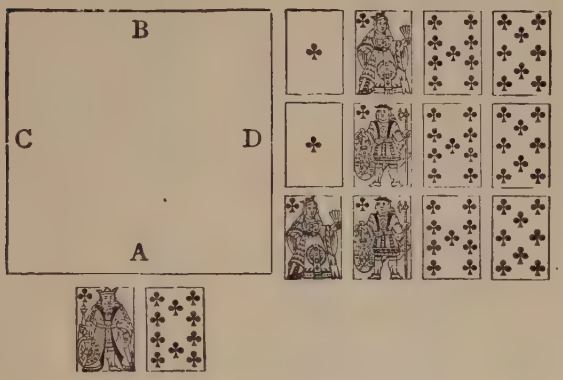
No matter how the remaining six cards of the suit are divided, no loss can come from the play of the 9 second hand, and, as demonstrated above, second hand may gain a trick by the play. Again:—



1.—D leads 8 (from k, kn, 9, 8); A plays 10; C plays 2; B plays 3.

The cover by A saves B's ace, and if D continues the suit, A B have three tricks. If A does not cover, no play will yield more than two tricks. If A finds the ace with

C, the sacrifice of the 10 costs nothing, as then no play will give more than a single trick. If the lead is from the ace, kn, 9, 8, A, likewise, cannot lose by covering with the ten, and he may gain a trick by saving partner's king. Once more:—



If D leads the 8, A gives him one of the three combinations diagramed above, and it will be readily seen that if the lead is from either of the first two, the k makes if put on the first round. If the lead is from the last, it is an even chance that the ace is with B, so that it is more than two to one that the k makes if played upon the 8 led, second hand holding k, 10 only.

Similar arguments apply to various combinations, such as ace, 10; qu, 10; kn, 9 and one small card. These special plays—second hand—when the 8 is led, follow in tabular form.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO, 4.

SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
ace, k—and one small	8	small *
ace, 10—and one small	8	10
k, kn—only	8	k
k, 10—and one small	8	10
k, 10—only	8	k
k, 9—and one small	8	9
k, 9—only	8	k
k—and one small	8	k
qu, 10—and one small	8	10
qu, 10—only	8	10
qu, 9—and one small	8	9
qu, 9—only	8	9
kn, 9—and one small	8	9
kn. 9—only	8	9
10—and one small	8	10

* If weak in trumps, play k. In trumps, play small.

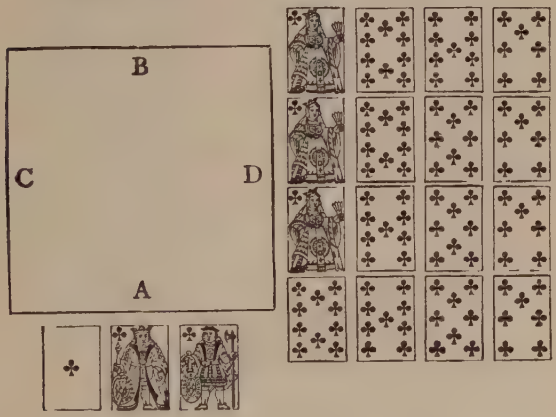
Analysis of Play of Second Hand when the 7 is Led.

The preceding analysis demonstrates that when the 8 is led as a fourth-best card, second hand holding *two* cards higher than the 8, and one small card should nearly always cover the 8. When the 7 is led as the fourth-best card, the same principle applies if second hand holds *three* high cards—*i. e.*, three higher than the 7—and one small card. The conditions are analogous. The object in covering the 7, as in the case of the 8, is that you may save a high card for partner; and while, in many cases, this may not gain a trick in the suit, it must not be forgotten that so long as a high card like the ace,

k or qu remains in, it may greatly embarrass the leader and render his game less aggressive. This not infrequently results to your advantage in the play of the other suits. Besides, if second hand covers the 7 with a card like the 10, 9 or 8, and it holds the trick, the play is very informatory, and usually much more information is given to second and fourth hand than to leader and third hand by the play.

The different combinations will be examined in detail.

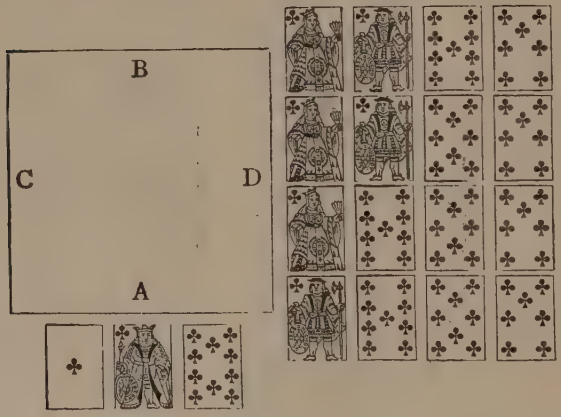
1.



It will be seen at a glance that if D leads the 7, and A puts on the kn it wins the trick if the lead is from either of the combinations headed by the qu. If the lead is from the suit headed by the 10, the play may lose if the qu is with C, but it is an even chance that the qu is with B. The advantage in playing the k the first round is

very slight, but on the other hand if the k is played the kn is almost sure to make. The only advantage in playing the kn is that, if A is forced to next lead the suit (the kn having won), he is sure of all three tricks ; when if he leads from the tenace he must lose the kn if qu is against. But this is more than offset by the fact that if second hand plays kn, and it loses, it defers until the third round the bringing home of the ace. Play king.

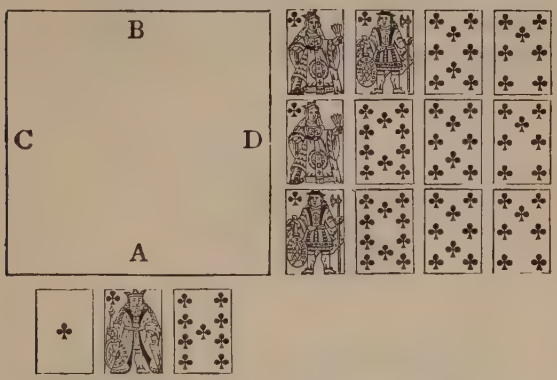
2. only.



If D leads the 7, from either the first or second combination in the above diagram, the play of the 10 by A gains a clear trick—barring trumps—as against the play of the k. If the lead is from the last two it is more than an even chance that the 10 is the better play ; for the play of the k may lose a trick even though B has the qu or kn, and even if the qu or kn is with C little, if any,

harm can come from the play of the 10, especially if A is strong in trumps. It is an even chance that 10 wins the trick the first round. The 7 led as an original lead, second hand holding ace, k, 10 only, should usually play the 10, especially if strong in trumps, or with a good hand to be led up to. In trumps play 10.

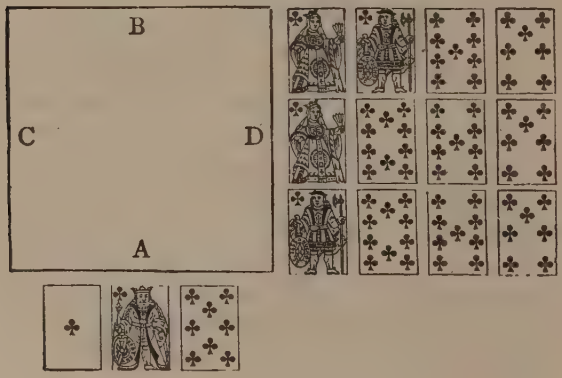
3. only.



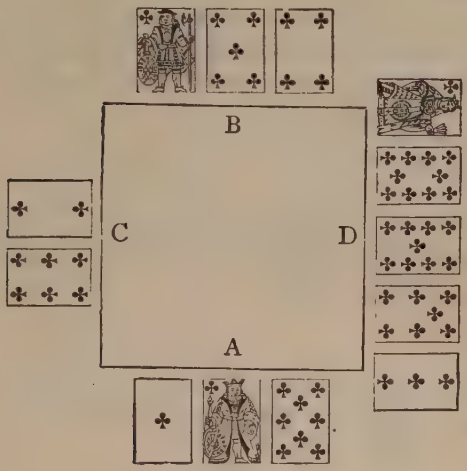
If second hand plays the 9 on the 7 led, holding ace, k, 9, the finesse is against one card in each case, and this card is as likely to be with B as with C. There is more justification for finesse second hand against the declared strong suit of the opponent, than there is in third hand finesse in partner's strong suit. It is true that if A finesses the 9 here, and it loses to C, he defers until the third round the bringing home of the ace, and C may be short of the suit and trump the ace or king ; but it must not be forgotten that B is just as likely to be the one

who is short, and that if C does eventually trump A's master card, it *costs him a trump*, and this may be the best possible thing for A and B's game. Unquestionably, the cards may lie so that the finesse may lose, but the writer believes that the advantage is largely in favor of the play of the 9. If the card A finesses against—the qu, kn, or 10—is with C, he cannot reasonably expect to make more than two tricks in the suit by any play ; if the card is with partner, he must make three tricks if he finesses, but he may make only two if he plays the k. Second hand holding ace, k, 9 only, 7 led, should, if the situation and his hand justifies any finesse, play 9. In trumps, unless desirous of stopping the lead, play 9.

4. only.



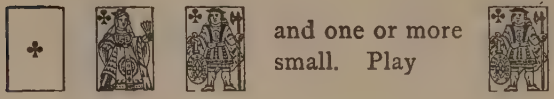
The same arguments apply as in the preceding example. Suppose the following :—



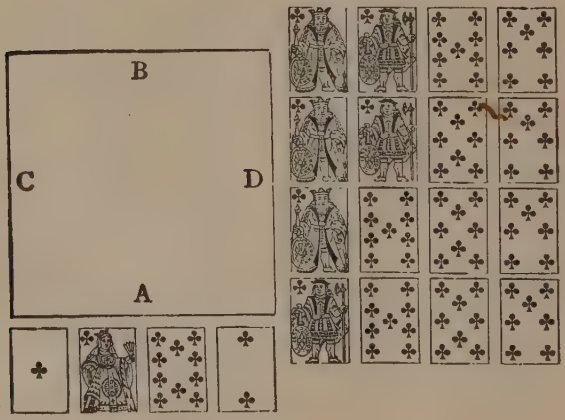
1.—D leads 7; A plays k; C plays 2; B plays 4.

Now, if A, C, or B next lead the suit, A B have but two tricks. If D next leads the suit, A, to be consistent, must play ace ; for if he was not justified in finessing the 8 the first round, he certainly is not now, and A B have but two tricks in the suit. If the hands of C and B are exchanged, no harm is done by the finesse of the 8, as no play will yield more than two tricks. If, in this instance, C has the kn only, or the kn and one small, A, if he finesses the 8, may have his ace or k trumped, but it does not follow that this is a loss to A—it may be a gain. If the lead is from the qu, kn, 9, 7, the chances are more in favor of the finesse ; if from kn, 10, 9, 7—less,

as the play of the 8 cannot gain unless A finds B with the qu single, or qu and one small card. Neither can the play of the 8 lose, in the case just cited—(D leading from kn, 10, 9, 7)—unless C is found with qu single, or singly guarded, except that B may be void of the suit, and the finesse subjects him to an unprofitable force. In plain suits or trumps, play 8, unless desirous of stopping the play of the suit.

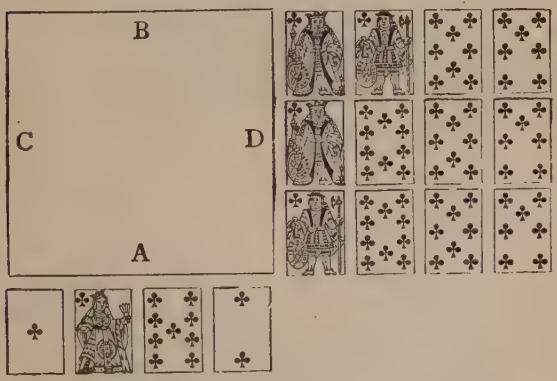
5.  and one or more small. Play

6. and one small.



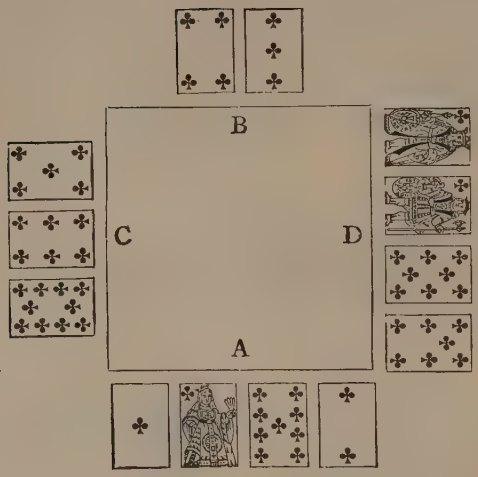
The rule has been:—In trumps play 10; in plain suits, if strong in trumps, play 10, if weak in trumps play qu. When the 7 is led the 10 is a better play than the qu, whether strong or weak in trumps; but an examination of the foregoing diagram will show that second hand should play small in either plain suits or trumps. If the lead is from either the third or fourth combination, the play of the 10 weaken's A's hand to no purpose, and is very likely to lose a trick. If the lead is from the first or second combination, the 9 or 8 is to A's left, but it is an even chance that B will win the 7, if A plays small. In trumps or plain suits play small.

7. and one small.



Second hand holding ace, qu, 9 etc., the 7 led, should play small. If he covers the 7, and the 9 loses to either the k, kn or 10, the sacrifice of the 9 may lose a trick, and second hand has nothing to gain, except, possibly,

when the lead is from the kn, 10, 8, 7, and fourth hand has the k. Suppose the following:—

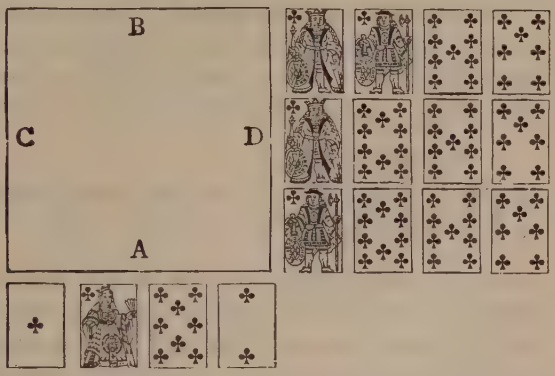


1.—D leads 7; A plays 9; C plays 10; B plays 3.

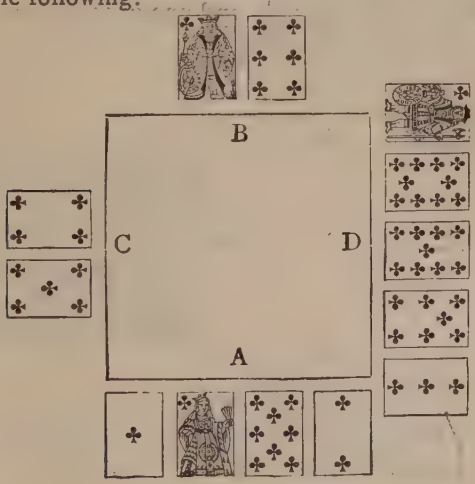
2.—C leads 6; B plays 4; D plays 8; A plays qu.

Here the 8 forces the qu and a trick is lost for had A played small he would then have held over D, and he gains nothing if the 9 wins. Play small.

8. and one or more small.



Here the case is different. A's 8 cannot make except on the first round, and if it loses to C no harm is done; if it holds the trick it is a clear gain in some situations. Take the following:—



1.—D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 4; B plays 6.

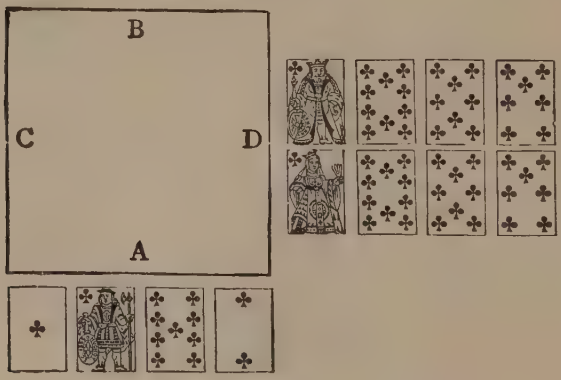
2 (C to lead).—C leads 5; B plays k; D plays 3; A plays 2.

A B have four tricks in the suit. If A does not cover the 7, B must play the k, and no play will yield more than three tricks. Second hand holding ace, qu, 8 etc., 7 led, should play the 8, either in plain suits or trumps.

9. and one or more small.

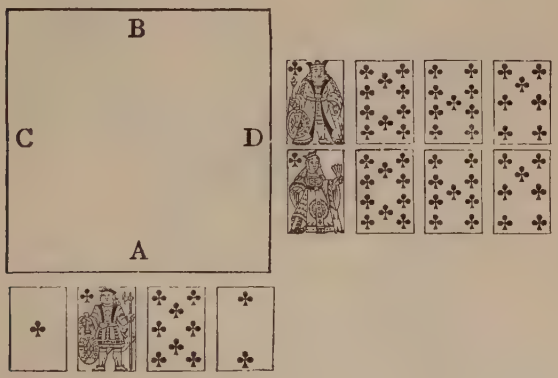
Second hand holding ace, kn, 10 and others, 7 led, should play small in plain suits, in trumps the 10. The lead is from the k or qu and 9, 8, 7 and the 10 may lose and cannot gain. In trumps the leader may have both k and qu and the 10 should be played.

10. and one or more small.



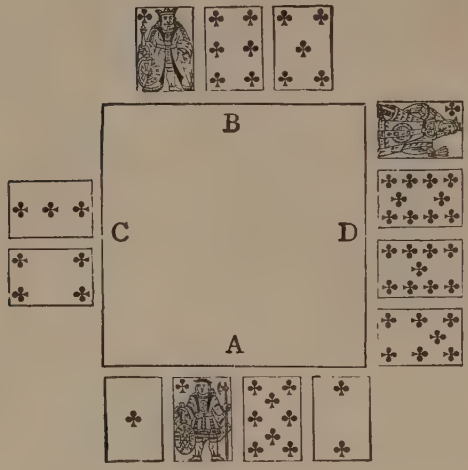
Second hand is in much the same position here as when holding the ace, qu, 9 etc. If he covers the 7, and it holds the trick, little, if anything, is gained. If the 9 loses to the k or qu, he may lose a trick. In either trumps or plain suits, play small.

11. and one small.



Second hand is in the same situation here, as when holding ace, qu, 8 etc., the 7 led, the play of the 8 may

gain a clear trick and cannot possibly do any harm. Suppose this case:—



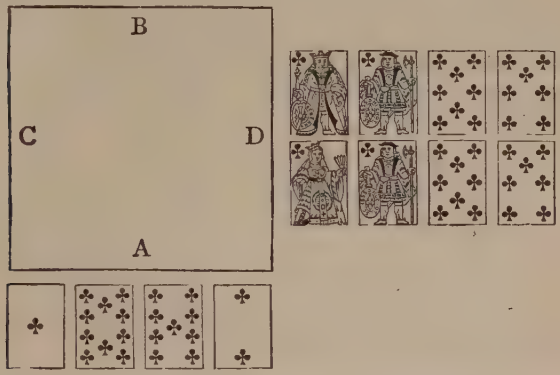
1.—D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 3; B plays 5.

2 (D to lead).—D leads 9; A plays 2; C plays 4; B plays k.

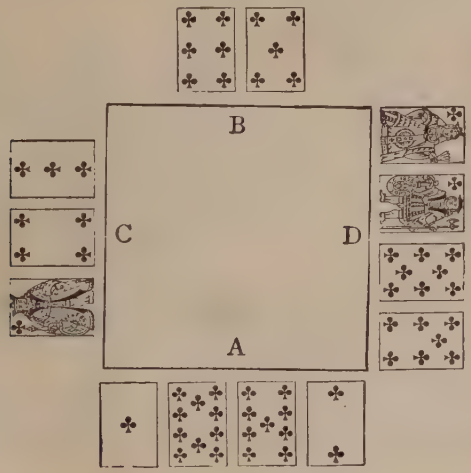
If B now comes through D, A B have four tricks in the suit. If A does not cover, no play will yield more than three tricks.

If the hands of C and B are exchanged, A gains nothing by covering the 7; neither does he lose anything. Play the 8 in plain suits or trumps.

12. and one or more small.



Second hand has nothing to gain by covering the 7 led, holding the ace, 10, 9, etc., and he may lose by the play. Suppose the following:—



1.—D leads 7; A plays 9; C plays k; B plays 5.

2.—C leads 4; B plays 6; D plays kn; A plays ace.

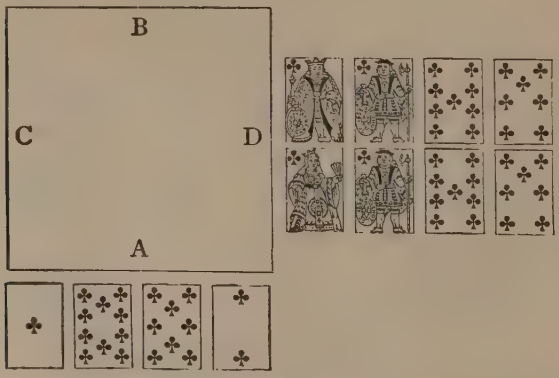
If A is now forced to lead the suit he will take no other trick in the suit. This would not be the case had he played low the first round, as then he would be left with the 10, 9 and must take two tricks in the suit. On the other hand, suppose that covering the 7 does save the k for partner, nothing is gained by the play. Exchange the hands of C and B, and then—

1.—D leads 7; A plays 2; C plays 5; B plays k.

2 (C to lead).—C leads 6; B plays 3; D plays kn; A plays ace.

And A B have three tricks in the suit, no matter who next leads the suit, and no play will do more. Play low in either trumps or plain suits.

13. and one or more small.



With this holding second hand should cover the 7 led,

as the play cannot lose and may result in gain. It is quite clear that the 8 can have no trick-making value after the first round, for the leader must have three cards all higher than the 8. If the 8 is put up the first round it may save partner's k or qu and under certain conditions a trick may be gained. If the 8 falls to third hand, no harm is done. Play 8.

14. and one small.

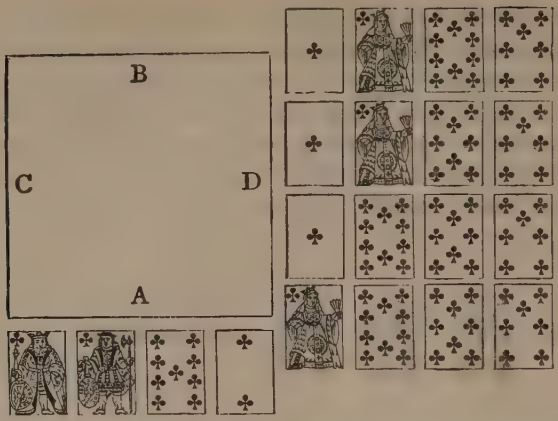
Second hand should play qu. If the 10 is played and it wins, there is little, if any, advantage gained. If the 10 loses, a trick may be lost. There is more chance of the 10 making the second or third round than there is the first. Play queen.

15. and one or more small. Play

16. and one or more small. Play

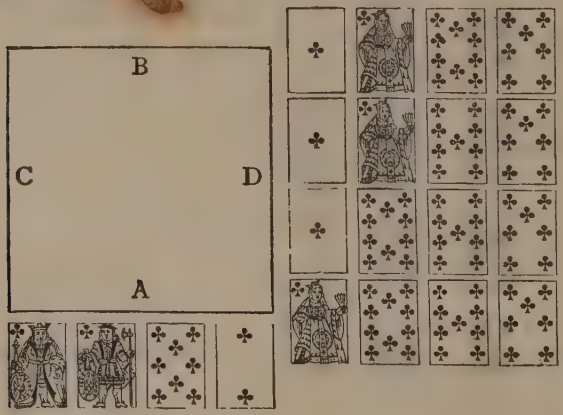
17. and one or more small. Play

18. and one or more small.

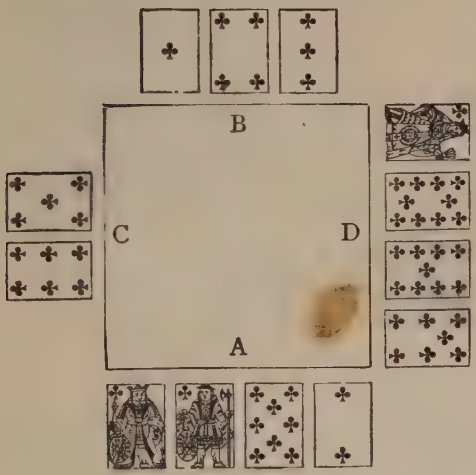


With this combination second hand has little, if anything, to gain by covering the 7 led, and if the 9 loses to the ace, qu or 10 in third hand, his hand is weakened to no purpose, and a trick may be lost. Play low.

19. and one or more small.



When the 7 is led, second hand holding k, kn, 8, etc., has nothing to gain by covering, if the lead is from the ace high combinations, as the card he may save for partner is too low in rank to be of advantage to their combined hands. No loss, however, can come from playing the 8. But if the lead is from the qu, 10, 9, 7, A may gain a trick by covering the 7, and cannot lose. For example:—



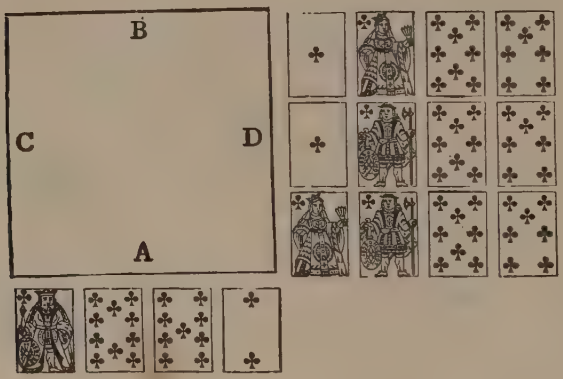
1.—D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 5; B plays 3.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 4; D plays 9; A plays kn; C plays 6.

3.—A leads 2; C renounces; B plays ace; D plays 10—and D has not a trick in the suit. If, on the other

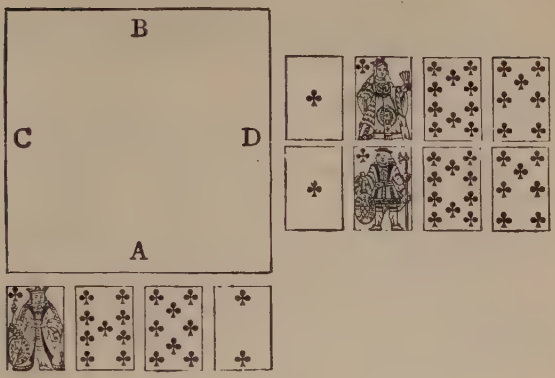
hand, A does not cover, the 7 forces partner's ace, and D must make a trick. If the ace is with third hand no harm is done. Play 8.

20. and one or more small.

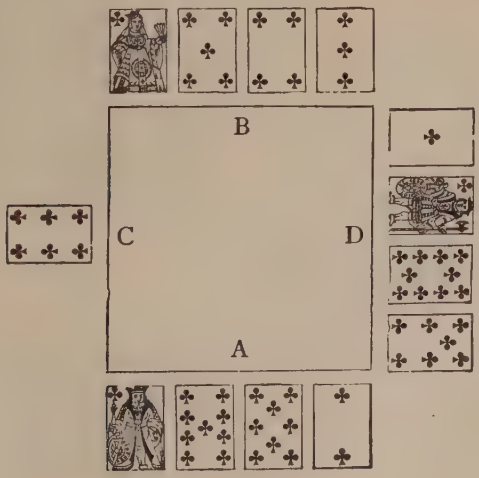


With k, 10, 9, etc., second hand should pass the 7 led. When the lead is from a combination headed by the ace, there is nothing to be gained by covering, and loss may result. When the lead is from the qu, kn, 8, 7, the play of the 9 may gain a trick, but it may also lose a trick. Play low.

21. and one or more small.



When the 7 is led, and second hand holds k, 9, 8 he knows the ace and 10, and either qu or kn, is with the leader. Second hand may gain a trick under certain contingencies by covering the 7, and he cannot lose. Note the following:—



1.—D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 6; B plays 3.

2. (B to lead).—B leads 4; D plays 10; A plays k; C renounces.

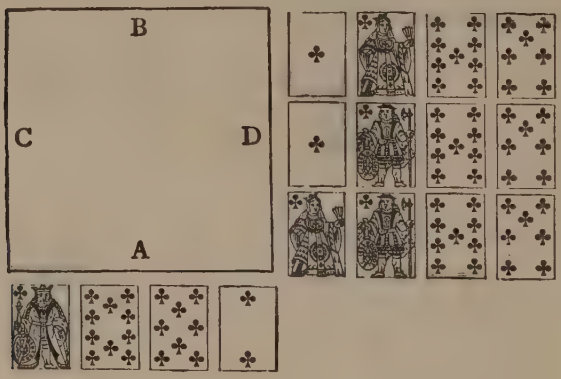
3. (D to lead).—D leads ace; A plays 2; C renounces; B plays 5.

B's qu is now good and A B have three tricks in the suit. On the other hand, if A does not cover—

1—D leads 7; A plays 2; C plays 6; B plays qu.

Now, no matter how or by whom the suit is next led A B can take but two tricks. The chances here for gain by covering are slight; but, also, no risk is run. Play 8.

22. and one or more small.



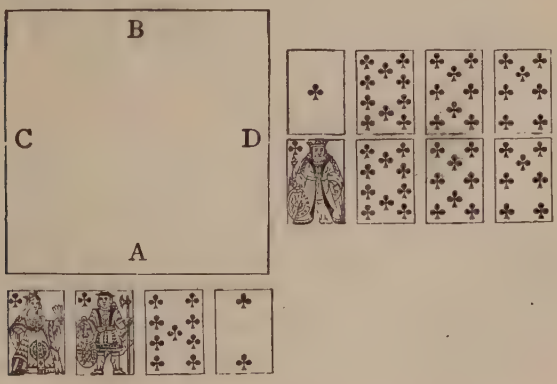
If the 7 is from either of the first two combinations, there is little advantage in covering the 7, except in the way of the information it imparts. When the lead is from the qu, kn, 9, 7, the 8 will save the ace—if with

partner, if with third hand, it is no sacrifice as the 8, in this case, has no more value than the deuce. Play 8.

23. only.

When the 7 is led, second hand holding k, kn only, should play the k. The lead can be from any of ten combinations. In six of these the leader has the ace, and the k makes. In one combination the leader has no court card and the k will make the first round or not at all; for if the third hand has the major tenace he finesses qu; if partner has qu the k loses, but the qu and kn will make. So that there are seven of the ten situations in favor of the play of k second hand upon the 7 led; and in the other three, it is an even chance that the ace is with partner. Play k.

24. and one or more small.

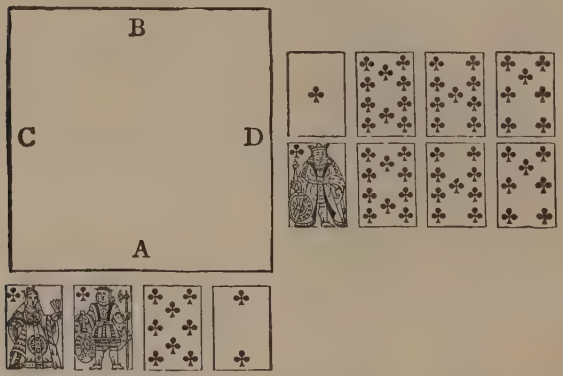


Second hand holding qu, kn, 9 and one or more small, has nothing to gain by playing the 9 upon the 7 led, and he may lose. Play low.

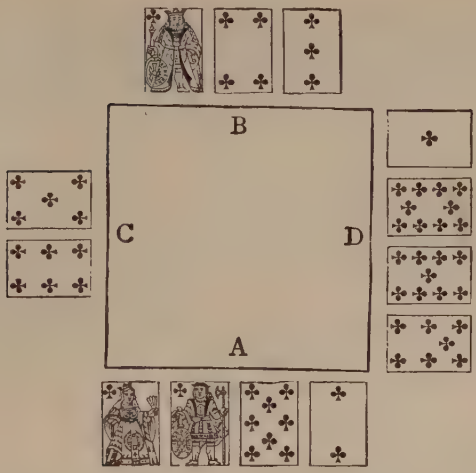
25. only.

To the 7 led, second hand should of course play the 9—it must force the ace or k, or hold the trick. In trumps, however, play kn, as leader may have both ace and k.

26. and one or more small.



Second hand should play the 8, as it may save the ace or k for partner. If the court card is with third hand no harm is done. The advantages in favor of covering the 7 are very slight, it is true, but there are no risks attending the play. Suppose the following: —



1.—D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 5; B plays 3.

Now, no matter how or by whom the suit is next led, D can make but the single trick. Suppose A is forced to continue the suit, he leads the deuce, knowing that B has either ace or k. But if A passes the 7, and is forced to lead the suit, D has the chance of two tricks, as—

1.—D leads 7; A plays 2; C plays 5; B plays k.

2 (A to lead).—A leads qu; C plays 6; B plays 3; D plays ace.

D must now make two tricks in the suit. Suppose, again, that the ace and k change places in the above diagram, then:—

1.—D leads 7; A plays 2; C plays 5; B plays ace.

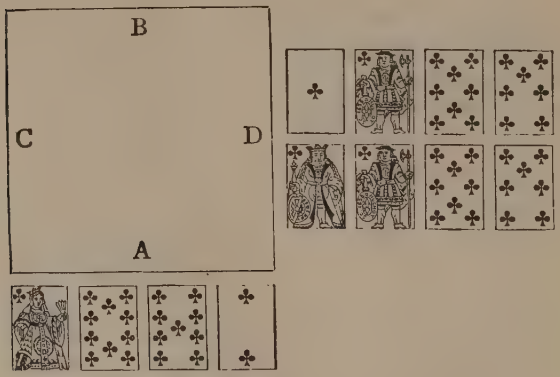
If A is forced to next lead the suit, D must next take two tricks, and, besides, he can now take the *next trick*, and then force C, if he cares to, and this might be an advantage to his game. The play of the 8 by A insures

the *first two tricks* in the suit, and D's k will not make until the third round of the suit. These points of advantage are all gained by the cover, and no loss can possibly attend the play. Play 8.

27. only.

In plain suits it is useless to play kn, as the 8 must force the ace or k if against. In trumps play kn, as leader may have both ace and k.

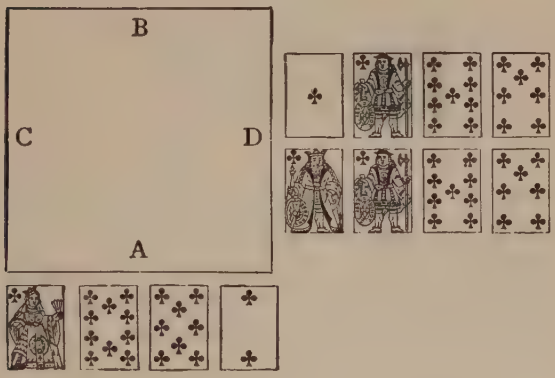
28. and one or more small.



If second hand covers the 7 in this situation, he may

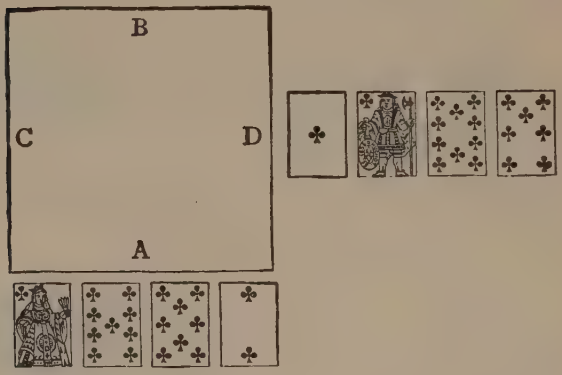
lose a trick if the 9 falls to either the ace or k in C's hand, and if he finds the court card with B, little advantage is gained. The risk of loss is greater than the probability of gain. Play low.

29. and one or more small.



The case is different here. A's 8 cannot possibly make a trick, or assist in making one, if not on the first round, consequently no loss attends the play of the 8 upon the 7 led. The cover may be advantageous for the same reasons as pointed out in the analysis of No. 26. Play 8.

30. and one or more small.

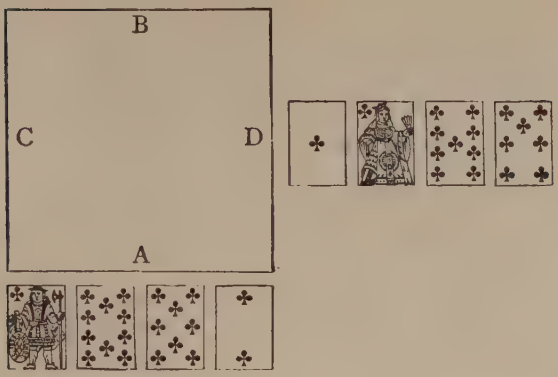


When second hand holds qu, 9, 8, and one or more small of a suit, the 7 led, he reads at once that the leader must have exactly ace, kn, 10, 7, and he should, of course, cover the 7. The play may gain, and it cannot lose. Give B the k, 6, 5 and C the 4, 3 in the above diagram, and then:—

1.—D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 3; B plays 5.

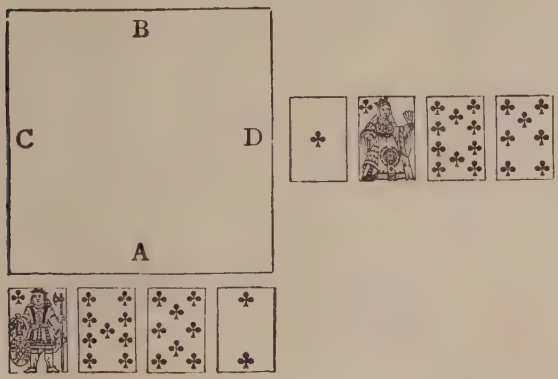
It requires no argument to show that the hands of A and B are stronger after the first round, if A plays the 8 than they are if he plays the deuce. Play 8.

31. and one or more small.



The situation here is almost identical with the preceding one. See analysis of No. 30. Play 8.

32. and one or more small.

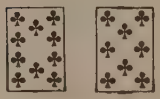


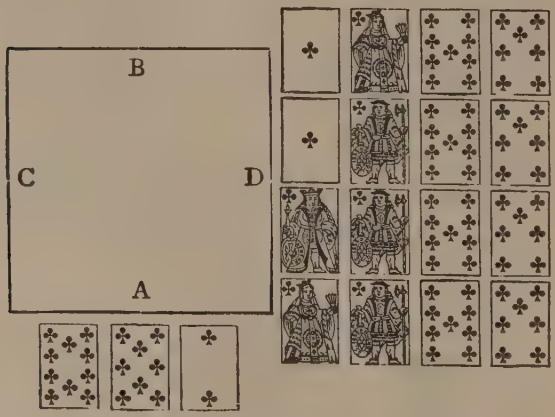
When the 7 is led, second hand holding the kn, 9, 8 knows the leader remains with the double tenace only, and that the k is to his left. In the event of B holding k and three small, there is an advantage in covering the 7—if D goes on with the suit. Give B the k, 6, 5, 3, C the 4, and then:

1. D leads 7; A plays 8; C plays 4; B plays 3.

2. (D to lead.) D leads ace; A plays 2; C renounces; B plays 5.

If D now leads, or if led through and finesses the 10, A B take three tricks in the suit. This they could not do, if A does not cover the 7. Even if no trick is gained in the suit, it embarrasses D's game, and no loss can result. Play 8.

33.  and one or more small.



When second hand holds the 10, 8 and one or more small, the 7 led, he cannot lose by covering with the 8. If the lead is from the first combination diagramed the play is practically immaterial; if from the second, the play of the 8 may gain a trick if B has k, qu, and small; if from the third, the play of the 8 may save for B the major tenace—and end in gain; if from the last the 8 may leave B with both ace and k, and gain a trick. Play 8.

The following tables serve as a summary of the analysis of Second-Hand play when the 7 is led as an original lead.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO. 5.

SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
ace, k, kn—with or without others...	7	k
ace, k, 10—only.....	7	10
ace, k, 9—only.....	7	9
ace, k, 8—only.....	7	8
ace, qu, kn—and one or more small..	7	kn
ace, qu, 10—and one small.....	7	small
ace, qu, 9—and one or more small...	7	small
ace, qu, 8—and one or more small...	7	8
ace, kn, 10—and one or more small..	7	small *
ace, kn, 9—and one or more small...	7	small
ace, kn, 8—and one or more small...	7	8
ace, 10, 9—and one or more small...	7	small
ace, 10, 8—and one or more small...	7	8

* In trumps play 10.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO. 6.

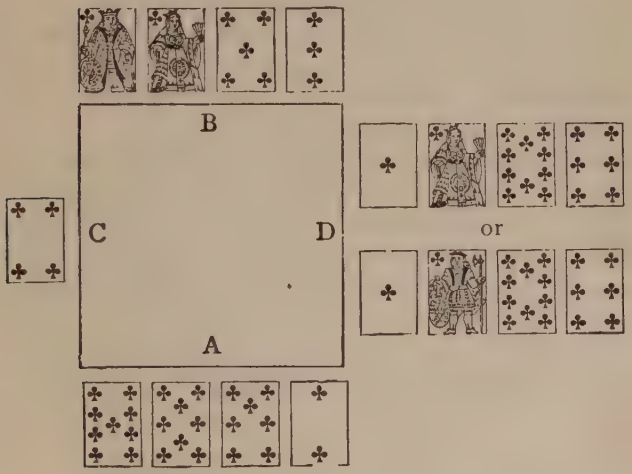
SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
k, qu, 10—with or without others	7	qu
k, qu, 9—with or without others	7	qu
k, qu, 8—with or without others	7	qu
k, kn, 10—with or without others	7	10
k, kn, 9—and one or more small	7	small
k, kn, 8—and one or more small	7	8
k, 10, 9—and one or more small	7	small
k, 9, 8—and one or more small	7	8
k, 10, 8—and one or more small	7	8
k, kn—only	7	k
qu, kn, 9—and one or more small	7	small
qu, kn, 9—only	7	9*
qu, kn, 8—and one or more small	7	8
qu, kn, 8—only	7	8*
qu, 10, 9—and one or more small	7	small
qu, 10, 8—and one or more small	7	8
qu, 9, 8—and one or more small	7	8
kn, 10, 8—and one or more small	7	8
kn, 9, 8—and one or more small	7	8
10, 8—and one or more small	7	8

* In trumps play kn.

Second hand should ever be on the alert to cover the card led, when it may strengthen partner's hand, and not weaken his own. It is understood that partner will not read such play as a call for trumps. When second hand throws a card like the 10 or 9 upon the 8 led, or the 10, 9 or 8 upon the 7, and afterwards plays a lower card, *it is not a call for trumps.* Second hand can often cover and also call. Take—k, 9, 8, qu; 9, 8; and kn, 9, 8—second hand, for instance, wishing to cover the 7, and call, plays the 9. That is, he covers with the higher

of the two in sequence. If he does not wish to ask for trumps, he covers with the lower, and on the second round he can frequently play the higher of the two in sequence, and not the small card, as pointed out in the next illustration—thus making the play perfectly clear.

It is only in an exceptional distribution of a suit that second hand may be able to count the leader's hand with much accuracy, when a card of lower rank than the 7 is led; still, he sometimes can. Suppose D leads the 6, A, holding 9, 8, 7, 2 of the suit, should cover the 6, as it may save the k or qu for partner, to their mutual advantage. Take this case:—



If D leads the 6, A knows that the lead is from

exactly four cards and from one of the two combinations given above—

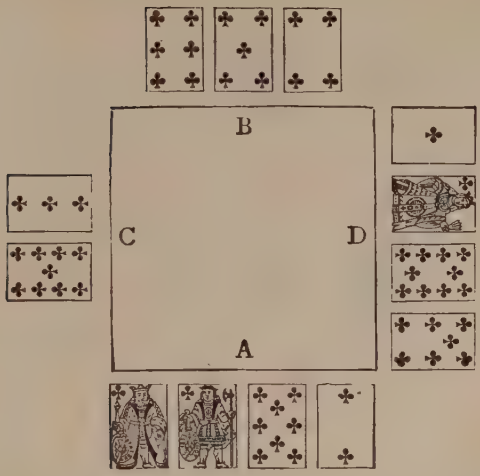
1.—D leads 6 (from ace, kn, 10, 6); A plays 7; C plays four; B plays 3.

2 (D to lead).—D leads ace; A plays 8; C renounces; B plays 5.

B's k and qu hold over D, and the play gains a trick, for if A does not cover, the 6 costs partner's qu. Note that A, in the second round, plays the 8, and not the deuce, so that B may be relieved of any doubt about A calling. Had A wished to ask for trumps he would have covered with the 8 and on the second round of the suit thrown the 7. Note, also, that B cannot be in doubt as to the location of the deuce, as it must be with A, for D has shown four cards only in the suit.

Second hand can often cover the lead the second round of the suit to great advantage, as will be pointed out further on, and not infrequently on the third round, second hand can save or lose a trick by covering or not covering, as the situation demands.

In trumps the card turned may very often direct second hand to a successful finesse or a judicious cover. These are the clever little points that the careful player does not miss, and the careless player rarely takes advantage of. For example, if C has the 8 turned, and D leads the 7, the latter has the rank of the 8 as a fourth-best card, as far as D's hand is concerned, and A, second hand, will play accordingly. Suppose the following:—



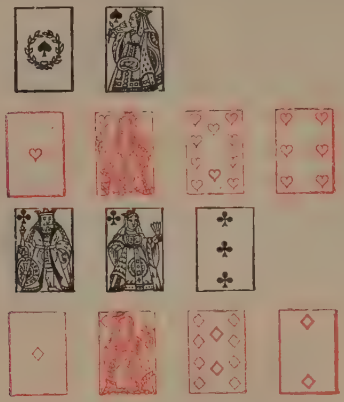
This is the trump suit, C turning the 9. D has called, but getting in before C, leads them:

1.—D leads 7. Now, if A cares to stop the lead of trumps, he plays the kn, with the assurance that the kn will win, as he can read the ace, qu with D.

Exceptional Hands.

Exceptional situations and hands have been referred to, and the student has been assured that in such positions he must exercise his own ingenuity, and not follow

the "book play," unless it fits the case. Here is an example of an exceptional hand. C's Hand:



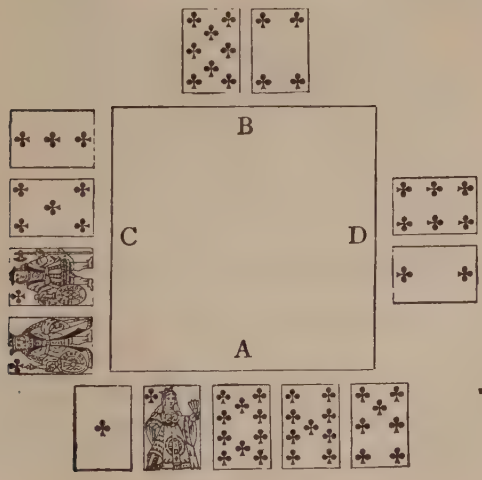
Diamonds trumps. A leads the 2 c; the usual play for C is the qu, holding k, qu, and small, but with this hand C should play the 3. If D wins the trick, so much the better; if it falls to B, C must still profit by it (most likely), for B may then open up a suit to C's immediate gain, he holding tenaces in all the suits. Again, suppose that A had opened with the 3 of diamonds, trump; C would have departed from rule, and played the 2, not the 10.

Covering second hand holding a fourchette, is a rule you might suppose should never be departed from, yet occasionally you may find it expedient to pass. For example, A leads trumps from kn, 6, 3, to protect two great suits developed by the play; C holds k, qu, 10, 2 in trumps, and having a great suit besides, and not objecting to have trumps come out—throws the deuce; B holding 8, 7, 5, 4 plays the 5; D, with the ace, 9 wins

tne trick and opens, with a strengthening card, the suit that must be C's—C wins the trick, draws the trumps, and brings in his great suit; had he covered the kn, he might have ruined his game. Again: A may lead trumps early in the hand from k, qu, kn; C holding ace, 10, 3, 2, and one great suit, may pass the k and qu, and by the play draw all the trumps, although B has the 9 and three others—and a great game results.

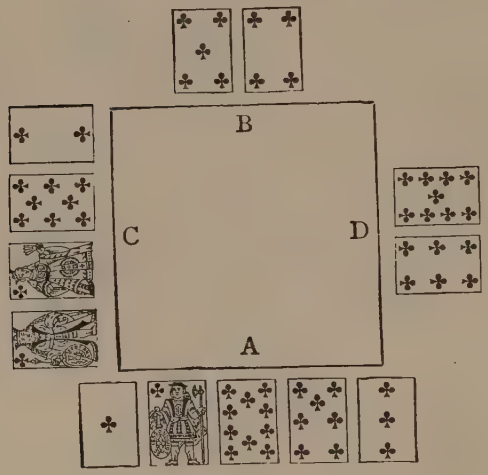
The Second Round of a Suit.

In the second round of a suit you must be careful to play the proper card. The good general rule—"In the second round of a suit if you have the winning card, generally put it on second hand"—should usually be followed, but owing to the improved order of leads, second hand can frequently count the leader's hand, and finesse accordingly. The fall to the first round may enable you to place the cards. Suppose the following:—



First round.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 4; D plays 2.

Second Round.—A leads 9; C plays kn, and not the k for he can count A's hand. Again:—

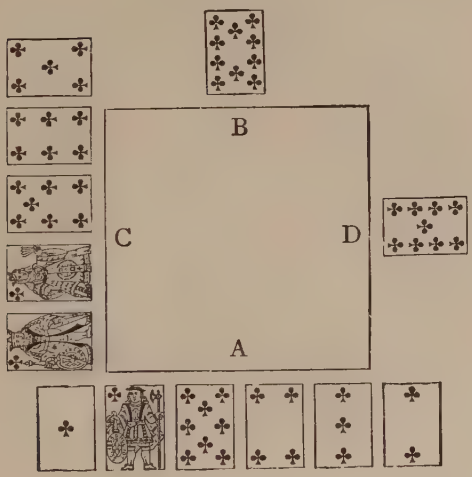


First Round.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 4; D plays 9.

Second Round.—A leads 7; C plays 8; B plays 5; D plays 6.

C plays the 8 here, even though he has *two sure* winning cards in the suit. In this instance he can count the cards in A's hand by his partner playing the 9, call-

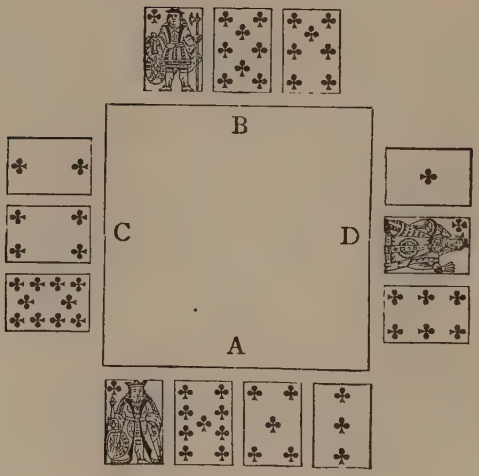
ing. C. simply follows the rule, for he has in fact *three* winning cards and throws the lowest of the three. The careless player second hand, on the second and third rounds of a suit loses many a trick. In such a situation as this, A would have been justified in going on with the three, for the purpose of not giving C the certain finesse. Here is another example:—



First Round.—A leads ace; C plays 5; B plays 10; D plays 9.

Suppose A leads the suit again, following with the fourth-best, C can count the cards, although the card is

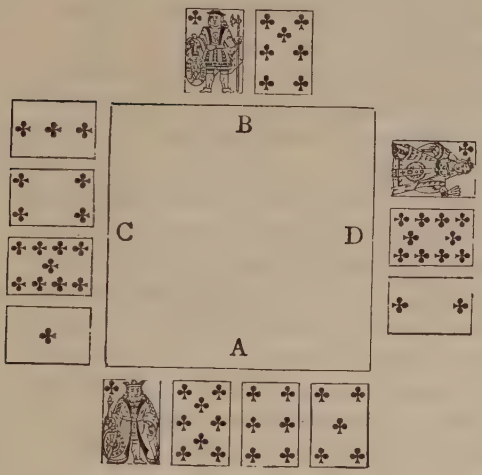
as low as the 4, and he just covers with the 6, knowing that it is just as good as the qu and thus keeps control of the suit. A, here, should of course depart from rule, and lead the 3—not the 4. On the other hand, C can often save a master card for D by covering second round with a third or fourth-best card. Take this case:—



First Round.—A leads 3; C plays 2; B plays kn; D plays qu.

Second Round (A to lead).—A leads 5; C plays 10; B plays 7; D plays 6.

If C throws the 4, the 7 in B's hand forces the ace and a trick is thrown away. Sometimes you can count the cards so that you finesse the second round, against a possible card. This is often justifiable. Suppose the following:—



First Round.—A leads 5; C plays 3; B plays kn; D plays qu.

C can do some counting here; B cannot have the 10 as he would have played it, if not calling, and he notes this inference for use further on.

Second Round (say A leads the suit again), A leads 6;

C plays 4; B plays 7; D plays 10. C holds up both ace and 9—thus keeping control of the suit and if D now leads through A, he (A) cannot make a trick in the suit. C would play badly to throw either the ace or 9, for when A followed with the 6, the 10 was at once marked with D; it could not be with A unless he opened the suit with the 10 high as with k, 10, 6, A would have gone on with the 10 thus forcing the play of the ace.

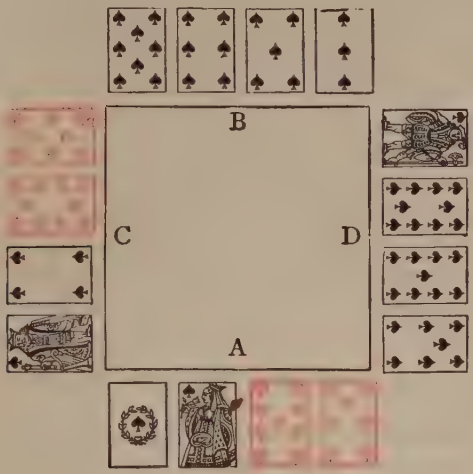
Examples without number could be given illustrating the necessity for careful work by second hand the second round of a suit, but the foregoing will suffice.

You must consider the rank of the card led. The deuce, for instance, proclaims a suit of exactly four, and there is, therefore, a greater probability of the suit going three times, and you may finesse accordingly. If a higher card is led the leader may have five, six, or more. You must remember the card turned, its rank and position to you. An eye must also be on the score, for you will hazard a finesse, that you would otherwise not make, when the game is desperate. After trumps have been declared against you, you are at once put upon the defense, and you play to keep command of your opponent's suits as long as practicable. If the trumps are evidently with you, your play is the more aggressive.

Late in hand you must be on the alert for forced leads and coups. For instance, k led after trumps are out, may be the Deschapelles coup, from four or more small ones, for the purpose of forcing the ace at once, that the possible qu in third hand may be good. If you suspect this coup do not part with the ace the first round as you may in this way defeat it.

With four cards only in hand, you holding the best and third-best trump against the second and fourth-best, you should throw the highest of any two cards of a plain

suit led. You cannot lose by the play and may gain a trick. For example:—



This is a typical case. Hearts, trumps, were first led by A, and the 9, 7 are marked in his hand. Spades have not been led.

1.—A leads ace s; C plays k; B plays 3; D plays 7.

C properly throws the king, for if A has the qu, C cannot by any play make more than two tricks, and if C finds the qu of spades with D, he gains a trick by the play. As the cards happen to lie C will make only the two trump tricks, had he played the 4 s, he would have made one spade trick and lost a trump trick. If, however, we give D the qu s, then D makes a trick in spades and C makes both his trumps. This cannot be done if C retains the k s.

Second Hand Renouncing.

When second hand has none of the suit led, he has choice of two things—trump or discard. The situation is always worthy of due deliberation. Every phase of the position should be duly weighed before you elect to do either. If it is early in the hand, and the card led is a doubtful one—one your partner may win if you pass—you should not trump unless you are wretchedly weak or very strong—strong enough to take the force and lead trumps. If you trump the doubtful card, partner reads your hand as very weak. If you discard, you select your weakest suit, taking care not to blank an ace, unguard a court card, or even to throw a singleton—you *may* need the singleton later on to give to partner, in the event of it being of the same suit as your partner's great one.

You will, as a rule, trump a doubtful card if you hold but two or three small trumps, for in this event your trumps cannot be put to better use; if partner has the master card of the suit led, he will not play it (unless his only one), and it may make later on. But if you have three trumps that seem best not to break—for instance, kn, 10 and small, or qu, kn, and small, or three good ones like k, qu, kn—pass as a rule. The old rule of—"with three trumps, trump freely," should be subject to the qualifications just named; and passing a *doubtful* card does not necessarily imply *four* trumps. If, however, the card led is a sure winner, you should in such cases generally trump. If you pass, you issue a peremptory demand for trumps, and partner will get in at any hazard and give them to you. You are sometimes justified in refusing to trump, even a winning card, if you have four fair trumps and a great suit, with a card of reëntry in

the third suit, and especially if partner is likely to be able to trump the next round if the suit is continued. If you have but three trumps, trump the winning card; if four trumps and a weak hand also trump; if with four trumps and a good hand besides, you may pass; but not if the leader is marked with other winning cards—sure to follow, as in such cases it is best to take the first force. If you have six trumps, or five and a fair hand, trump the winning card and lead trumps. If a card is led later on in the play, and you have none of the suit, you usually have some data from the previous fall of the cards to direct you. For instance, if partner has shown strength in trumps, you trump and lead trumps; if the adversaries have shown strength in trumps and you are too weak to offer any practical resistance, you trump unhesitatingly.

The Play of the Second Hand when the Lead is Forced.

The examination of the play of the second hand has thus far assumed that the leads were normal, original leads from strong suits. When a lead can be identified as a forced or strengthening one, the conditions are materially changed. Good whist perception will often enable the second hand to determine that a lead is forced or led to the inferentially strong suit of third hand.

The student may be told that if the qu is led, second hand holding king, knave, etc., or king, 10, etc , knows the lead is not regular. Likewise king or queen, etc., knave led; king or knave, etc., 10 led; ace or 10, etc., 9 led. An 8 led, for example, second hand holding ace and 9; 10 and 9; ace, king, 9; ace, qu, 9; ace, kn, 10; ace, kn, 9; king, 10, 9; or any three cards higher than the 8, headed by the queen or knave, knows that the

lead is forced, and must play accordingly. Take the case of second hand holding the ace, k, 9, and one or more small, the 8 led; if you play the 9, thinking the 9 must win—you holding three cards higher than the 8—you defer to the third round the bringing home of the ace, and a trick may be lost in the event of your 9 losing to third hand. The argument applies to the lead of a smaller card, second hand holding such cards as render it impossible for the lead to be normal.

Forced, irregular, and strengthening leads are much more frequent in trumps than in plain suits, and a trick is often made or lost by covering or passing, as the case may be. In trumps much depends upon whether the lead is in answer to a call, and in plain suits whether the lead is for the benefit of third hand's assumed strong suit, or a purely forced one. When second hand holds a fourchette—a high card led—he knows the lead is irregular, and he should nearly always cover. Below will be found a few examples in second-hand play to forced leads of the queen and knave.

TABLE OF SECOND-HAND PLAY, NO. 7.

(FORCED LEADS.)

SECOND HAND HOLDING	CARD LED	PLAYS
k, 10, 9—with or without others	qu	k (a)
k, 10—and two small	qu	small (b)
k, 10—one small	qu	k (c)
k, 10—only	qu	k
k, 10, 9—with or without others	kn	k
k, 10—and one or two small	kn	small (d)
k, 10—only	kn	k
qu, 9—only	kn	qu
qu—and one small	kn	qu (e)

(a) If second hand passes and third hand holds ace, knave and others, he will not take a trick; if he covers, he must make the 10

(b) Play small to qu. If kn follows qu, play k; if a small card, play small.

(c) If the k wins, and on the second round of the suit the 9 is led through, play 10; if a smaller card than the 9, play small.

(d) If kn wins, play 10 to second round. In trumps when kn is led in response to call, second hand holding k, 10 and one small should cover the kn.

(e) In trumps play small unless the kn is led in response to call, when play qu.

CHAPTER IV.

THIRD HAND.

UNTIL within the last decade the analysis of the play of third hand was very inadequate and unsatisfactory. The books dismissed the subject almost with the single line—"generally play your highest card third hand." The new order for leads from high-card sequences together with the fourth-best principle revolutionized the game, and rendered obsolete, to a great extent, the text-books of the day.

The Unblocking Game.

The play of third hand with reference to unblocking in partner's strong suit will first be examined. By original lead is meant the *first* lead of the hand, and it will be assumed that the lead is from strength, *i. e.*, the lead is from a suit of four or more cards. Plain suits will first be considered; and it is taken for granted that the card selected as original lead is the one prescribed as conventional in the Table of High-Card Leads. (See page 70.)

Unblocking on the First Round.

This feature of third hand play is of the utmost importance, and its object is twofold. First: You prepare, under certain conditions, to unblock on the first round of the suit. Second: You enable partner to count the

hands. The general rules laid down to meet the play of third hand in this regard are as follows:—

1.—When the ace, queen, knave, ten or nine is led, as an original lead, third hand, not making an effort to take the trick and holding *exactly* four cards of the suit, retains his lowest card—playing his third-best.

2.—To the second round of the suit, third hand having played his third-best card to the first round, and again not attempting to win the trick, plays his second-best—or middle card.

This is to avoid calling by the play; besides, if B throws his lowest card to the second round, he might as well have played it to the first, as the second play vitiates any advantage that might ensue from the first.

3.—Third hand having played his third-best card to the first trick, and later in play returning the suit, plays his highest card, even though he holds three cards at the time.

This is an exception to the general rule of returning the lowest of three cards.

4.—Third hand having played his third-best card to the first trick, subsequently discarding from the suit, discards the middle or second-best card, unless at the time he desires to call for trumps.

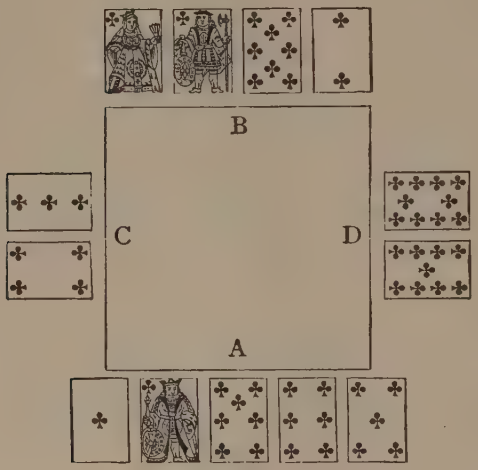
5.—Third hand wishing to call, and at the same time unblock, plays first his second-best, and then his third-best card.

For example—A leads queen; B holding 10, 8, 6, 4, plays first the 8 and then the 6, and has called, still retaining his lowest card with which to avoid blocking the suit.

The advantages of the unblocking game are manifold, and too much attention cannot be given to this feature of third-hand play. The following are examples illustrat-

ing the application of the foregoing rules. These illustrations apply with particular force to the original lead, as it is then assumed that the leader has four or more cards in the suit, and has led from strength.

Third Hand Holding Exactly Four Cards.



1.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 8; D plays 9.

B holding exactly four cards of the suit plays his third-best card, retaining the lowest. A marks that the deuce has not come out in this round, and reads at once the probability that B is unblocking, and consequently has four in suit. If no one is calling, A *knows* that B is unblocking.

2.—A leads k; C plays 4; B plays kn; D plays 10.

B plays his second-best card. Note the result. No one has called and the deuce has not fallen; this enables A to count the hands and place the remaining cards of the suit. A knows that B has unblocked and must have held originally four cards of the suit. Eight cards have fallen, A has yet three, B must have the queen, 2, and the suit is established. Aside from the information imparted by the play, which is very valuable, B is now in a position not to block A's suit, for when the suit is played again, B will play the queen, and have the 2 to give back, and, barring trumps, A will make his small card. If B has to discard from this suit he discards the queen or he undoes all that he started in to do, and might as well, so far as unblocking is concerned, have played first the 2 and then the 8, thus irretrievably blocking the suit. Note that if B does not prepare to unblock on the very first round he is helpless, and blocks the suit no matter how he afterwards plays, if A goes on with the suit.

Suppose in the example just given, that C holds but the trey, giving D the 10, 9, 4, then:—

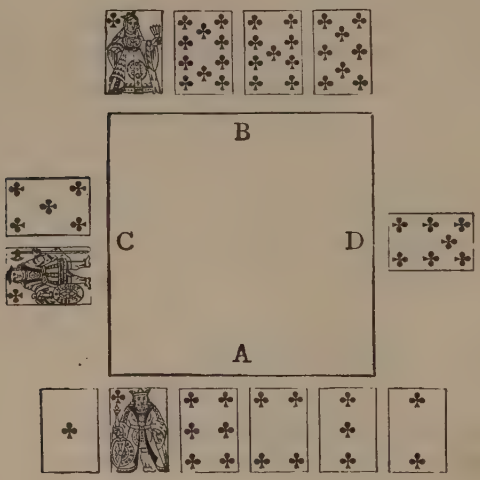
1.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 8; D plays 4.

2.—A leads k; C trumps; B plays kn; D plays 9.

B must play knave just as if C had followed suit. B cannot lose by the play, for D can have but two more of the suit, one of which will fall, and B's queen will draw D's last card. But mark that B will now not discard from this suit—if possible to avoid it,—and if he does, he will throw the deuce, as there is nothing to show B that A has the 10. B knows, however, that if A led from five only D has the 10. It follows that the leader must always bear in mind that partner may be getting rid of command, and he must not draw the inference that partner is short of the suit; or that he is calling, simply

because he plays a high card the first round; or that he is void of the suit because he plays a very high card the second round.

The object of the unblocking game being to show four cards in the suit as well as to unblock, third hand follows the rule even when he cannot possibly get out of the way. Take this case:—



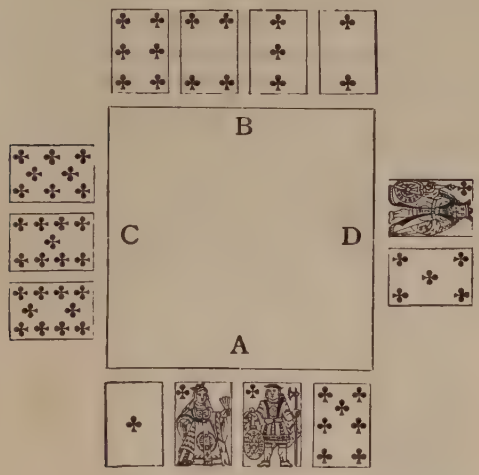
1.—A leads ace; C plays 5; B plays 9; D plays 7.

Here B's cards are in sequence and no play will unblock, but B follows the rule simply as a matter of information, for the fall *may* inform A of his holding.

2.—A leads k; C plays kn; B plays 10; D renounces.

A's suit is blocked, but A can read B with the queen, 8, and this he could not have done had B played the 8 to the first round. The 8 not falling is marked with B,

consequently the queen also, and this information may be of value to A. Again:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 3; D plays 5.

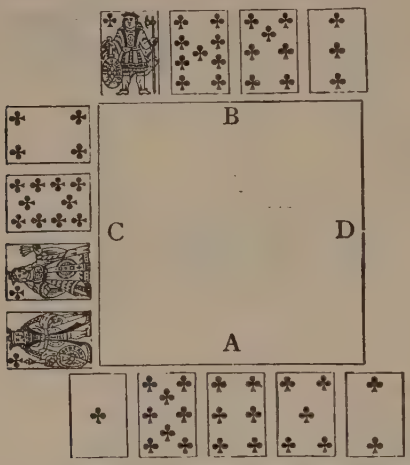
It is evident that B cannot block no matter how he plays; but B retains his lowest card that A may count the hands. A notes that the 2 has not fallen and reads at once the probability that B has four of the suit.

2.—A leads qu; C plays 9; B plays 4; D plays k.

A can now read the hands; B has the deuce and either the 6 or 10, and the suit is established. If B had played first the 2, then 3, A could not place the suit, for then D might have the 10, 6 yet in hand. In this event A would not have command, which might make a material difference in A's subsequent play. The leader should closely watch the fall of the small cards, for if after the second

round a smaller card than those played is missing, the leader knows—if he has not the card himself—that partner has exactly two cards of the suit yet in hand—one higher and one lower than the two played. There is a bare possibility of one of the opponents beginning a call on the first round, and abandoning it on the second, but this is a contingency hardly worth considering.

Third hand may be forced to abandon his unblocking tactics on the third round, for instance:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 4; B plays 7; D trumps.

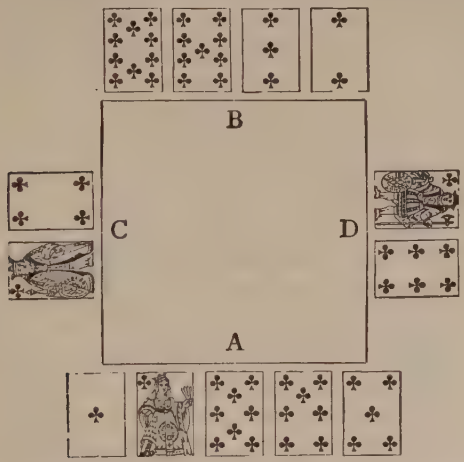
Now, if B next leads the suit, he leads the kn, not the 3. When B plays his third-best card to the first round, he must return the highest of his three remaining cards, if he next leads the suit.

2 (C to lead).—C leads k; B plays 9; D discards; A plays 2.

3.—C leads qu; B plays 3; D discards; A plays 5.

B here abandons his unblocking play, for he cannot read A's cards, and if he throws the kn, he makes the

10 good if with C. B has not called for trumps, and the play informs A that B has the kn, for if B held the 10 and not the kn, he would have thrown the 10, as in this case the 10 would have been of no more value than the 3. The 3 falling from B informs A that B had four originally, and that he has abandoned his unblocking play. It will frequently occur that B is compelled to play his lowest card the *third round* of the suit, having played his third-best on the first round, and his middle card to the second round; but the play cannot be a call, for if B wishes to call and at the same time unblock, he reverses the order of his first and second play by playing his second-best card to the first round. For instance:—

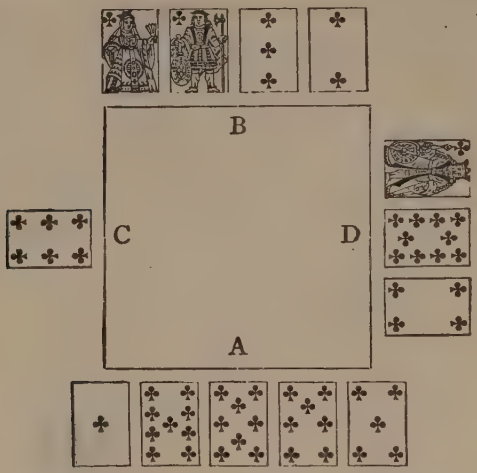


1.—A leads ace; C plays 4; B plays 9; D plays 6.

2.—A leads 7; C plays k; B plays 3; D plays kn.

The play is very informatory. A knows that B has called and is unblocking, for the deuce must be with B, and the 10 also; for if B held only 9, 3, 2 originally in the suit, he would have played the 3, and then the 2.

To the ace led, B should not attempt to call and unblock, if at any great sacrifice of strength, for by such play he may give up control of the suit, losing a trick, even if C and D follow suit to the ace. Take this instance:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 6; B plays kn; D plays 4.

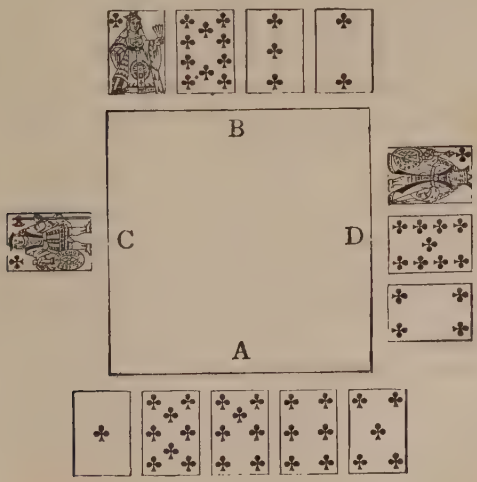
Here, B should have abandoned the call or the unblocking play. He should have read that unless A holds k or 10 a trick may be lost by sacrificing the kn.

2.—A leads 7; C discards; B plays qu; D plays k—D's 10 is good.

Third hand holding k, qu, or qu, kn, and two small cards, should not attempt to call and unblock to the ace led. The call is of very little consequence in such cases. With k, qu, and two small it would be folly to play qu to ace led, for B must get in the next round—barring trumps,—and to play the qu would not only endanger the loss of a trick in the suit, but it would be publishing in-

formation of a detrimental character. If B drops the qu to the ace, A may change the suit to disadvantage, or if he goes on with the suit, C may trump if void—giving B the possible king, when he might have otherwise passed had B played small, trusting the trick to D. Calling third hand, often interferes with the best play, as it also does with good second hand play, and the best players rarely use the trump signal under such circumstances. Good players lead trumps without waiting for this signal, when the situation demands a trump lead.

When to the ace led, C drops a tolerably high card, indicating the probability of it being his only card, B should not attempt, for two reasons, to call and unblock, if at any sacrifice: I.—He may lose a trick in the suit. II.—If D suspects a call, he may force C if the opportunity offers, when, if B had not called, D might not have done so. Suppose this case:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays kn; B plays 10; D plays 4.

The 10 by B is bad; C must be short in the suit, and if D has the k, 9, a trick is lost.

2.—A leads 6; C discards; B plays qu; D plays k.

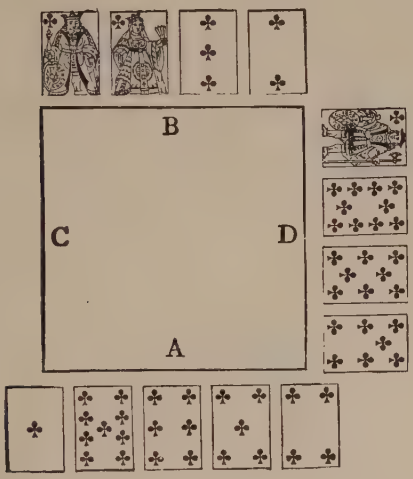
A can read that B is calling and that he has the 3, 2, but D's 9 is now good. Then, suppose that D had not the 9, but a losing card instead, he would force C at once, if he, too, suspected that B was calling. The play of third hand in detail now follows.

Ace Led Originally.

A leading ace, B holding *any* four cards (*exactly*) of the suit, plays his third-best card.

B retains his lowest card irrespective of the play of C. The probability of loss occurring, if C discards or trumps the first round, is so remote that it is hardly worth considering. B cannot possibly lose, except when A opens from a suit of exactly five cards, and the small cards with the ace must all be very small ones. Even in this event B can abandon his tactics, in the majority of cases, without any risk of A reading the play as a call. It is possible for the cards to lie so that B may lose a trick by unblocking on the first round, if C or D is void of the suit; but the distribution of the suit and the subsequent play must be so exceptional, to bring it about, that it is not worth while to burden the rules applying to the unblocking game with this qualification. In the great majority of cases no loss will result from B unblocking when C renounces, and the

advantages resulting from the play far outweigh the loss that may under exceptional conditions occur. Here is an example illustrating how B may lose a trick by unblocking, when C renounces to the ace:—



1.—A leads ace; C trumps; B plays 3; D plays 7.

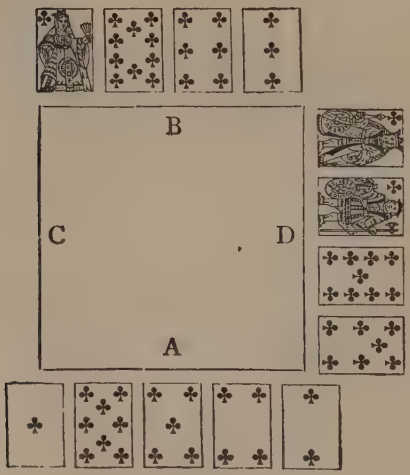
2 (D to lead).—D leads 8; A plays 4; C trumps; B plays qu.

If B does not play qu, he calls for trumps. But note that B may here deem it best to throw the deuce, thus calling for trumps, even though he originally did not in-

tend to ask for them. Or he may be sure of winning the next trick and then, if B does not lead trumps in the face of the ruff, A would take the cue that B was not calling, but had abandoned his unblocking game. So there are more ways than one for B to escape loss even though it is liable to occur.

3 (D to lead).—D leads 10; A plays 5; C discards; B plays k.

D's knave is now good. But mark that if A's second-best card is the 10, no loss can result, even if B sacrifices the queen. A's cards with the ace must all be smaller than the 10 in order for B to lose, and, on the other side, B's second-best card must be the 10 or a court card, or no loss results from the sacrifice. As:—



1.—A leads ace; C trumps; B plays 6; D plays 7.

2 (D to lead).—D leads k; A plays 2; C discards; B plays 10.

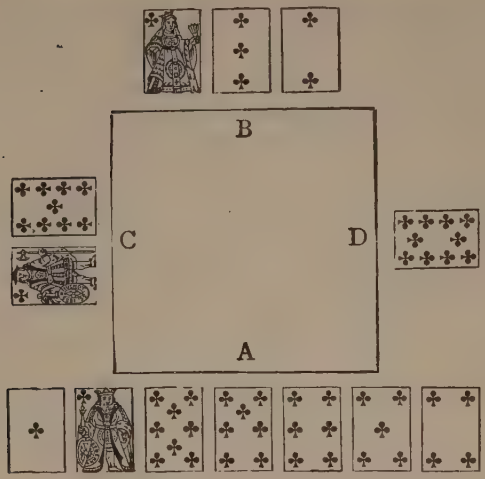
Note that if B gets in after trick 1, and does not lead trumps, he is not calling, and could then safely play the trey, and not the 10, to the second round of this suit; or if he next leads the suit, he leads the queen, and to the third round plays the trey—not calling. So, also, if A next leads the suit, and C passes, and B puts up the queen, no loss results.

3 (D to lead).—D leads 9; A plays 4; C discards; B plays qu.

And D's knave is good. Note, again, that if the 9 and 8 change places no loss is possible, for then A covers, if D leads the 8, and B throws the 3 and has not called, and if D leads the kn, B wins, and A's 9 is good. The conditions are about the same if D is the one who is void. From these illustrations it will be seen how remote is the chance for loss by B unblocking to the ace led, even when C is void. When all follow suit to the ace B cannot lose, no matter how high a card he sacrifices upon the second round, nor how small A's small cards may be; but B may very often be forced to forego his unblocking tactics on the third round, as will be pointed out further on.

Ace Led, Followed by King.

When the ace is led, followed by king, the queen is denied; and if the king is not led, it is not with leader. King led, after ace, shows at least three cards smaller than the queen, and third hand plays accordingly, and also subject to the fall. For example;



1.—A leads ace; C plays 9; B plays 2; D plays 10.

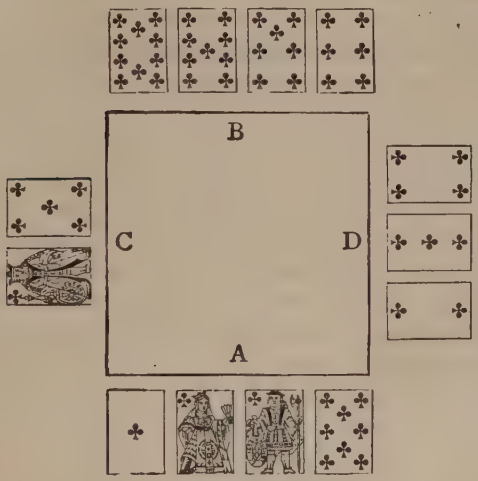
2.—A leads k; C plays kn; B plays qu; D trumps.

B here throws the queen, that A's suit may not be blocked. C can have no more, and D, even if calling, can have but one more. Had C and D played small cards, B must have played the 3 to the second round, as he then could not have read that A must have led from six at least. Had B held four cards—say the queen, 10, 3, 2—he would have played first the 3 and then 10, irrespective of the fall, simply to have informed A that he held the queen, 2 yet in hand.

Ace Led, Followed by Queen.

When the qu follows the ace, the king and 10 are denied, and the knave and one small card only remain. B, with king and two small cards—originally—plays small to the queen, as—if he throws the k—the 10, which

is surely against, will make if doubly guarded. B, holding any four cards, retains his lowest card, and while he knows, as soon as A follows with the qu, that he cannot block the suit, yet he may abandon the unblocking play simply to enable A to read his hand. Take this case:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 5; B plays 7; D plays 2.

2.—A leads qu; C plays k; B plays 9; D plays 3.

3 (A to lead).—A leads kn; C discards or trumps; B plays 6; D plays 4.

Here B knows that he cannot lose by throwing the 10, for he knows that D's only card of the suit must fall, but A cannot so read; if B plays the 10, then, so far as A can read, D may have the 6. B playing the 6, marked him with the 10, and note also, that had B played the 6, then 7, then 9, A could not locate the 10. It must not be forgotten that when B plays a higher card on the

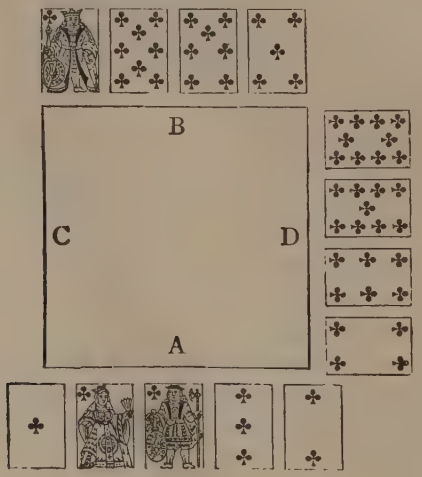
second round than he did on the first, and afterwards throws a smaller card than the one first played, he is not calling.

Ace Led, Followed by Knave.

When the knave follows the ace, the queen and at least two small cards—including the 10 as a small card—are proclaimed.

B, holding king and two small cards—originally—plays his king to the knave if C follows suit, but if C discards or trumps, B plays small to the knave as the 10 guarded may be with D.

B, holding king and three small cards, plays his third-best card to the ace, his middle card to the knave. It is incumbent upon A to so play, at trick three, that he does not force B to abandon his unblocking play. Besides, it may happen that B's smallest card is of higher rank than A's largest small card, in which case A may be at fault. Take this case:—



1.—A leads ace; C trumps; B plays 7; D plays 4.

Now, suppose that trumps come out, and A goes on with the suit.

2.—A leads kn; C discards; B plays 8; D plays 6.

3.—A leads qu; C discards; B plays 5; D plays 9.

Here, A by bad play forces B to block his suit no matter how he plays. After the second round, B was marked with the k, 5, and A should have led the small card (trick 3), and given B the opportunity to clear.

Take the position diagramed, giving C the 4, and then—

1.—A leads ace; C plays 4; B plays 7; D plays 6.

2. A leads kn; C trumps; B plays 8; D plays 9.

3 (D to lead).—D leads 10; A plays 2; C trumps; B plays k.

B would play badly if he should throw the 5. A is marked with the queen and trey, and the play cannot possibly deceive A, for when to the second round the 5 did not fall, A gives it to B. Suppose again that at trick 3, D opens a suit of which B is void, and A wins the trick, B, if he discards from this suit, throws the king. B should ever be on the alert to get rid of command of A's suit by discard, when practicable. When the ace and knave win, all following suit, it is certain—barring unusual finesse, or rather holding up—that B has king and one small, and the subsequent discard of the king by B simply confirms this inference.

Ace Led, Followed by Ten.

When the 10 follows the ace, the leader remains with *exactly* queen, knave.

With king and two small cards, B plays small to ace, and king to 10, irrespective of C's play.

With king and three small cards, B plays third-best, then his middle card, and is marked with king and one other.

With more than four cards, B plays low. A must ever remember that B is not necessarily void of the suit, or signaling because he throws a high card the second or third rounds of a suit. When A, for example, leads ace then knave, he says to B, "I am long in the suit—five at least—do not block me," and A should not be deceived if B follows instructions.

Ace Led, Followed by Nine.

When the 9 follows the ace, the leader has the 10, and either the queen or knave and at least five in suit originally.

With king and any number of others, B must put the king on the 9, as queen or knave is against.

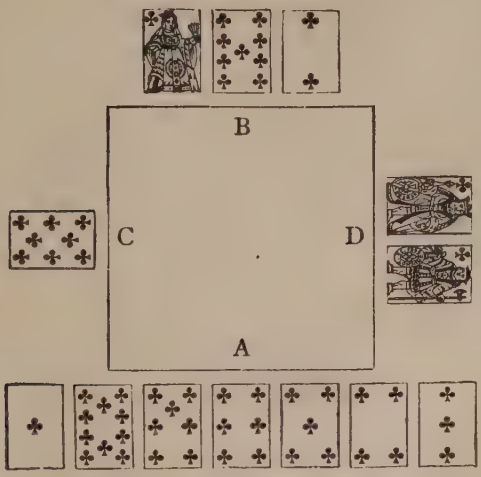
With queen and two small cards, B plays small to ace, and the queen to the 9, that he may not block the suit; the 9 will force the king, and A is left with knave, 10 and a small card. When B so plays, he may or may not have another card; the only positive inference A can draw is that B cannot have *two* more cards of the suit. When the leader opens with ace and follows with a card like the 9, 8, or 7—cards which readily enable B to read A's remaining cards, and B throws a high card to the second round, even though C has trumped or played a higher card, A must not jump at the conclusion that B has no more; for he may be acting upon the information A has published by his second lead, and is getting rid of command. A selects for his second lead his original fourth-best, for the very purpose that B may count his hand and if practicable get out of the way. Few players sitting second and third hand, take full advan-

tage of the information afforded by the play of the original fourth-best card, the second round of the suit by the leader. And it follows that if B does not and C does, A would be better off if he withheld the information.

Ace Led, Followed by a Lower Card than the Nine.

When a low card follows the ace, the leader has two cards higher than the one selected for the second lead, and one or more smaller.

B, with more or less than four cards, plays his smallest card to the ace, if he does not wish to call; and his play to the second lead of the fourth-best is modified by the fall. With any three cards B should always be on the alert to get rid of the command on the second round, if the fall demonstrates that it is practicable. For instance:—

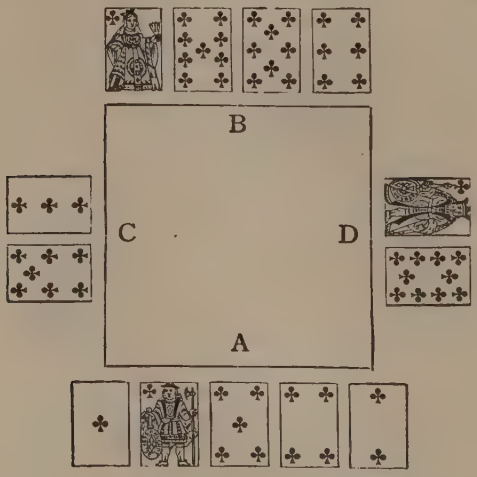


1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 2; D plays kn.

2.—A leads 6; C trumps—

B can do some counting here, and should throw the queen. A must have two cards higher than the 6; they cannot be the k, 7 for in this case A would have gone on with the king, consequently they must be the 10, 7. D, even if calling, which is unlikely, can have but the king and one small, and if D is not calling his king must fall, and A's suit is cleared.

Third hand having played his third-best card the first round, holding exactly four cards of the leader's suit, must be precise in the subsequent handling of his three remaining cards. If B returns the suit, A having abandoned it, or the trick losing to opponents, he must return the highest of the three. For instance:—



1.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 8; D plays 10.

Now suppose that A leads trumps, and they come out, leaving B in the lead.

2.—B leads qu; D plays k; A plays 2; C plays 7.

The unblocking game has been objected to on the ground that B must return the highest of three cards, having retained his lowest card the first round, the objectors claiming that this may often cause A to misread B's hand. This objection does not appear to be sound, for it will be found that in the majority of cases it does just the opposite, and that by no other play than the one proposed, can A read the hands so absolutely after the second round. It must not be forgotten that B has retained his lowest card, and that this makes all the difference. The above example is a case in point. Note how absolutely A can place the two remaining cards of the suit with B. The 6 not showing up in these two rounds is marked with B, and he consequently must have the 9 also.

There is a point here, which has been referred to before, and is important. It is in this: A must be careful to play at trick three—*i. e.*, on the third round of the suit that B has unblocked in, so that he may render it possible for B to clear. Suppose that A next leads the suit under illustration (the one last in diagram) he should lead the 4, not the kn. If he leads the knave B must block, no matter how he plays. B's cards may often be of such rank—as in this instance,—that he can only get out of the way, even though he has retained his lowest card, by the coöperation of A.

3.—A leads 4; C discards; B plays 9; D discards.

B returns the 6, and A brings in the 5. On the other hand, suppose B plays as under:—

1.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 6; D plays 10.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 8; D plays k; A plays 2; C plays 7.

There is not a word of conversation between the players here. So far as A can read, C may have the qu, 9, and, in this event, if A is forced to lead the suit, he has no other trick. The return of the highest of three, when B has retained his lowest of four the first round, will oftener assist than mislead A; and the balance of advantage is surely with the unblocking game, despite the fact that it is possible for the cards to so lie, that loss may result from the play here advised.

If B finds it expedient to discard from the suit he has unblocked in, he discards his middle card, if he has three at the time. If he has already discarded or followed suit, throwing the middle card, he will then discard the higher of his two remaining cards, if he can read at the time that A does not need his assistance in the suit. B should always be alert to make use of the discard as a means of getting out of A's way, no matter how he may have played in the previous rounds of the suit. Getting rid of the command by discard is not infrequently the *only* way open to B to clear A's suit, and he rarely has a second opportunity, if he misses the first.

B, wishing to call, holding exactly four cards of the suit, ace led, must play his second-best card to the ace. This B can nearly always afford to do without risk of loss. With two court cards and two small cards, as, king, queen, 3, 2; or queen, knave, 3, 2, B should abandon the call, as sacrificing the court card is a risk too great to run. The abandonment of the call under these circumstances is of no consequence, for B will get in on the second or third round. Holding king, queen and two small, for instance, it would be folly to throw queen. Besides it would most likely cause A to change the suit, when, if B plays his third-best card, A goes on and B gets in and no sacrifice is made. B, with one court card

and any three cards below the 10, may throw the second-best card to the ace without much risk of loss. If B's three cards are in sequence, or when his second and third-best cards are of indifferent value he, of course, runs no risk in calling. In rare cases B may deem it inexpedient to ask for trumps on the first round (thus playing his third-best card); but the subsequent play may render it obvious that a trump lead would be very advantageous. B may not be able to make a late call under these circumstances, but if it is evident to B that a trump lead would be advantageous, it will generally be evident to A, who will lead them without the signal from B.

King Led Originally.

The king is led as an original lead from ace, king and any two; king, queen and any two.

With *any* three or more cards, B plays his lowest card to the king, unless he desires to call or gain the lead.

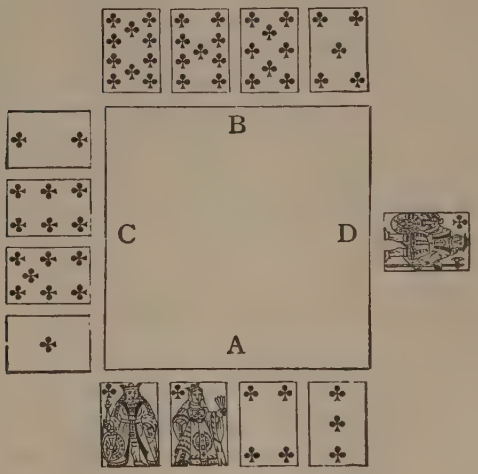
With ace, knave only, B plays ace on king and returns the knave.

With ace, knave and one small card, B plays small to king and to the second round the ace, unless C trumps. If C trumps B plays knave and is marked with the ace only.

With ace, knave and two small cards, B plays his lowest card to the king, and if C follows suit to the next round, B plays knave, and is marked with ace and at least one other card.

B, with any four cards, plays his lowest card to the king. The lead is declared to be from four cards only, and B holding four cards cannot block the suit, and he cannot afford to make any sacrifice in an endeavor to

show four. The king may be led from king, queen and two very small cards. Suppose the following:—



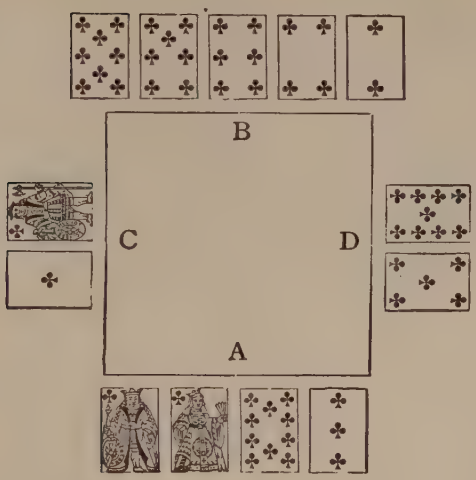
1.—A leads k ; C plays ace ; B plays 8 ; D plays kn.

Here B's four cards are almost in sequence, and yet the play of the 8 leaves C with the ultimate control.

2 (A to lead).—A leads qu ; C plays 2 ; B plays 9; D discards or trumps.

3 (A to lead).—A leads 3 ; C plays 6 ; B plays 10—and C's 7 is good, which would not have been the case had B played first the 5 then 8.

It is, however, incumbent upon A to unblock at the proper moment, if the fall demonstrates that B is longer in the suit than he is. Take this case :—



1.—A leads k ; C plays ace ; B plays 2 ; D plays 5.

2 (A to lead).—A leads qu ; C plays kn ; B plays 4 ; D plays 9.

Now suppose that B leads the suit again and D trumps, A should throw the 10, as B is marked with the 8, 7. If he retains the 10, he blocks B.

With none of the suit, B, of course, passes the king, if C does not cover.

Queen Led Originally.

(But *see* Appendix A.)

The queen is led, originally, from a tierce major, five or more in suit ; king, queen, five or more in suit, and from tierce to queen, four or more in suit.

With ace, king and more than four in suit, B plays his

lowest card to the queen, unless he is desirous of obtaining the lead.

B, holding the ace, king, knows that A has led from a tierce to queen, and if A next leads the knave he shows four in suit only, and B, holding ace, king and more than two small ones originally, plays small to knave as he is longer in the suit than A. If A follows queen with 10, five cards at least are proclaimed.

With ace, king and two small cards, B plays his third-best card to the queen, and to the second round the king, even though C discards or trumps. B is then marked with ace and one small.

With ace, king and one small card, B plays king to queen led, and returns the ace. But if C is void and discards or trumps, B plays small to queen.

With ace, knave, 10 and more than one small card, B plays his smallest card to the queen. B holding ace, knave, 10; or ace, 10 and others, knows that A has led from king, queen, five at least in suit.

With ace, knave, 10 and one small card, B plays 10 to the queen, and the knave to the second round, irrespective of the play of C or D, and shows ace and one small.

With ace, knave, 10 only, B plays 10, then ace, and is marked with the knave or no more.

With ace, knave and two small cards, B plays his third-best card to the queen, and the knave to the next round—whether C or D follows suit, discards or trumps—and is marked with the ace and one small.

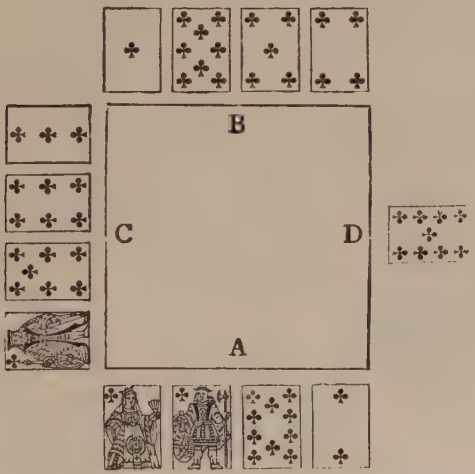
With ace, knave and one small card, B plays small—then ace.

With ace, knave only, B plays ace and returns the knave and can have no more.

With ace and more than three small cards, B plays his smallest card, if C follows, not covering, or trumps. If

C, however, discards, B plays ace, unless one of his small cards is the knave or 10, in which case he is assured that the lead is from king, queen and at least three small—and he passes the queen.

With ace and three small cards, B plays his third-best card to the queen. When the queen is led from queen, knave, 10 and one or two small cards, B may lose a trick by retaining his lowest card the first round, holding ace and three small cards ; but in order to bring this about, C must have king and three others, and B's second-best card must outrank C's second-best card. As :—



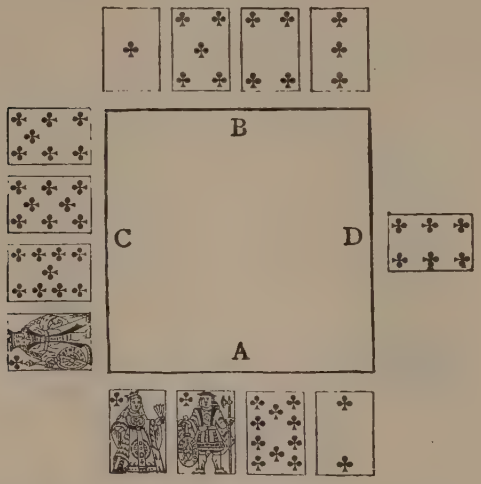
1.—A leads qu ; C plays 3 ; B plays 5 ; D plays 9.

2.—A leads kn ; C plays 6 ; B plays 8 ; D discards.

3.—A leads 2 ; C plays 7—and B must play ace and C's king is free.

This possible loss of a trick can only occur when B's second-best card is the 9 or 8 ; D must be void or with

one only; and C must have king and three others. The distribution of the suit is exceptional, and this is the only combination wherein it is possible for B to lose a trick by playing his third-best card the first round—queen led. There stands against this the great advantage A often gains by being able to read the suit the *first* round, and nearly always on the second, if B unblocks; when, if B plays his lowest card the first round, A may be left very much in doubt even after the second round. Take this example:—



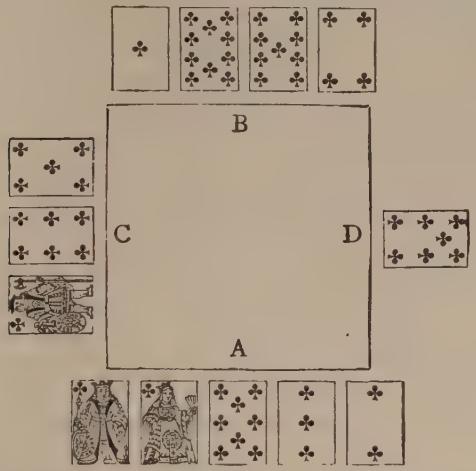
1.—A leads qu; C plays 7; B plays 3; D plays 6.

2.—A leads kn; C plays 8; B plays 4; D discards or trumps.

Now, so far as A can read, B may have the remainder of the suit, or C can have the king single, or the king, 9. If, however—

1.—A leads qu ; C plays 7; B plays 4 ; D plays 6.

And A reads that if no one is calling, B has ace, 3 and one card higher than the four, and on the second round A can place the suit absolutely. Or again :—



1.—A leads qu ; C plays 5 ; B plays 4 ; D plays 7.

2.—A leads 2 ; C plays 6 ; B plays ace ; D trumps.

(When the qu is led from k, qu, five or more in suit, winning the trick, the second lead is the fourth-best, counting from and including the qu. By ignoring the k, the play is rendered more informatory as the leader shows two cards of intermediate rank between the first and second cards led.)

A cannot place a card in the suit ; B may have no more, and C can have knave, 10, 9, so far as A can read from the fall ; for if C held the tierce to knave, he would likewise have played the 6 to A's deuce, knowing it must force the ace. On the other hand suppose—

1.—A leads qu ; C plays 5 ; B plays 9 ; D plays 7.

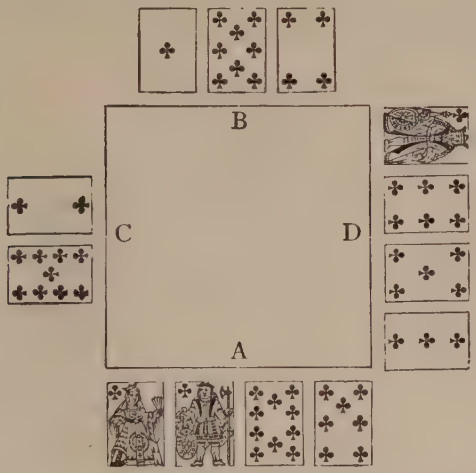
A knows—barring a call that B has ace, kn, 4 or ace,

10, 4. A can read that the great probability is that the suit is established and—barring trumps,— that there are five tricks in the suit. By the first play A, even after the second round, cannot tell from the fall that he might not lose two tricks in the suit. Furthermore, if B can be depended on to play his third-best card, holding exactly four in suit, A can nearly always read that B must have played his lowest card (when B does so play), and consequently cannot have exactly four, and in the subsequent play this may prove of great value to A. The balance of advantage lies with the unblocking game, and the writer believes that third hand should play his third-best card to queen led, as an original lead, holding *any four* cards (exactly) of the suit.

It must not be forgotten that not one long suit perhaps in ten, is brought in, and B's unblocking tactics go for naught; for the purely unblocking feature of B's play counts only when A succeeds in bringing in the suit. The gain in tricks is usually made by the proper play of all the suits, and the information afforded to A by B showing four, or that he cannot have exactly four, is rarely if ever lost; for such information can almost always be turned to good account, whether a long suit is made or not. The purely unblocking part of the play is not of so much practical value as showing the number in suit. Good players, who carefully note the absence of a small card from the fall the first and second rounds of a suit, often reap great advantage from the information. This feature of the unblocking game is sadly neglected by even very good players, and the writer believes that it is of more practical value than any other convention of the game, and should receive very much more attention than it usually does. The negative information here, is almost as valuable as the positive; for if A leads

the ace and B plays the deuce, or any low card that A knows is B's lowest card, he reads at once that B has less or more than four, and this negative information may, in the subsequent play, be of great benefit to A. B, in retaining his lowest card, may not only enable A to count the hands as to this one suit, but may greatly aid A in reading B's hand in the other suits. Suppose B has unblocked in diamonds, and after the second round is marked with two cards of the suit; A now leads trumps (clubs), B shows four, and subsequently five hearts; A knows that B's hand contains no spade, and he plays subject to this information. (*See* p. 55.)

With ace and two small cards, B plays small to queen, unless C covers. B's second play (in the suit) depends upon the follow by A and whether C follows suit, discards or trumps. Suppose the following:—



1.—A leads qu; C plays 2; B plays 4; D plays k. Now, if B next leads the suit, he leads ace; if C leads

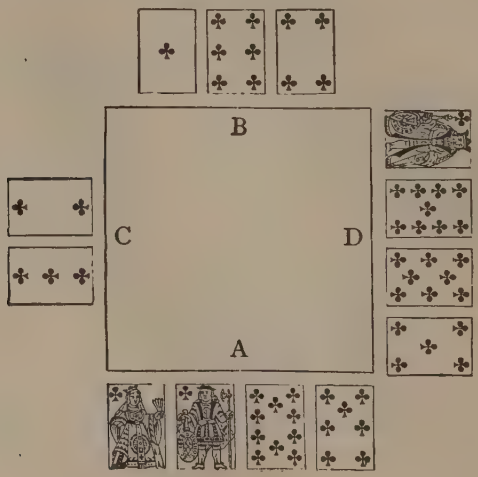
the suit B also plays ace. If D leads the suit through A, A puts on the kn and B having the ace, 8 (the 9 falling from C), wins with ace—

2 (A to lead).—A leads kn ; C plays 9 ; B plays ace ; D plays 3.

A shows that he had but four cards of the suit originally and C playing the 9 is marked with no more, consequently D must have had king and three others. But B having the 8 wins with the ace and—

3.—B leads 8 ; D plays 5 ; A plays 10—

A, having the 7, wins the 8 and draws the 6 from D. Had A had the 6 he would have passed the 8. The fall here rendered the play of A and B obvious Likewise, if B holds the 9 he wins the kn, even if C discards, and returns the 9, and if A has the 10, 8, he takes ; if not, he passes. But if B's two cards with the ace are very small cards he may have to hold up the ace the second round—the queen losing to D. As :—



1.—A leads qu ; C plays 2 ; B plays 4 ; D plays k.

2 (A to lead).—A leads kn ; C plays 3 ; B plays 6 ; D plays 5.

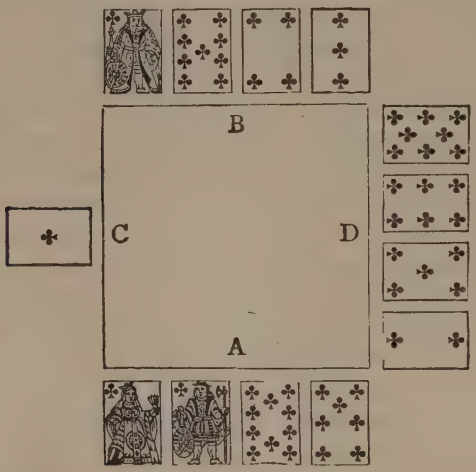
A, following the queen with knave, shows 10 and one small only, and B must play the 6, for unless C and D have exactly three cards each a trick will be lost as the 9 must be with the opponents. If A follows queen with 10 or 9—showing five in suit or quart sequence, B plays ace as he cannot possibly lose by so doing. If C does not follow suit to the 10 (to the 9 it is immaterial) discarding or trumping, B should play small; for if he puts up ace, and D has the 9, 8 and one small card, he will hold over A in the end. If this situation should occur at a critical point—say after trumps are out, and it is evident that A B must make four tricks in the suit (without losing the lead) to save or make the game, B would of course win the 10 with the ace and trust to finding A with a tenace over D—say knave, 8 against D's 9 and small.

When the queen is led, winning the trick, and a small card is next led, the lead is then proclaimed to be from the king and at least three small cards, and B holding ace and two small cards originally, plays ace to the second round, if C follows suit or discards ; but if C trumps, B plays small, unless he can read from the play that A held six originally, when he should play ace, as D can have but two cards remaining.

With ace and one small card, B passes the queen led, if C follows suit and does not cover. If C is void and trumps, B plays small ; if C discards, B plays ace.

With king and three small cards, B plays his third-best card to the queen, and to the second round his middle card. B knows—holding the king—that the lead is from tierce to queen ; and when C or D is short

of the suit, B may be forced to abandon his unblocking tactics on the third round, if A plays improperly at trick three — but not otherwise, unless, indeed it develops that A has made a forced lead from queen, knave, 10 only. Take this case :—



1.—A leads qu ; C plays ace ; B plays 4 ; D plays 2.

2 (A to lead).—A leads kn ; C trumps ; B plays 9 ; D plays 5.

Now, if A goes on with the suit, subsequently, leading the 10, B must play the trey, but if A properly leads the 7, B plays king. If A can be depended upon to play correctly, B reads, if A leads 10, that he originally led from three cards only.

With king and two small cards, B plays his lowest card to the queen, and if A next leads the suit—leading the 10, B plays k to 10, if C follows suit ; if C renounces, B plays small, unless his small card is the 9, when he still plays k. If C leads the suit, B, of course, plays king.

With any four small cards (*i. e.*, all lower than the qu), B plays his third-best card, and to the next trick his middle card.

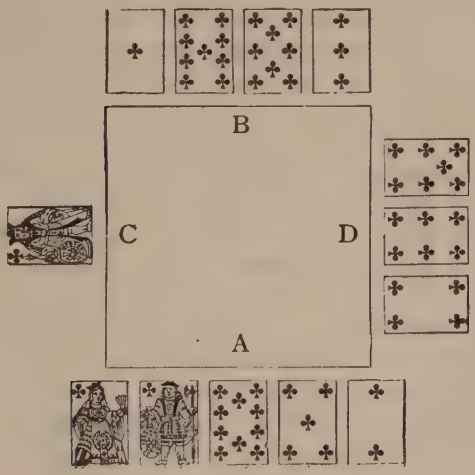
With none of the suit, B passes qu led, if C does not cover.

When queen is led, and C covers with king, B with ace and others must prepare to unblock on the subsequent rounds if his small cards are blocking cards—say 9, 8 and small, or nine and two small. When the queen is covered by C with king, the lead is at once proclaimed to be from tierce to queen, and if A next leads the suit he will show his numerical strength by the card he selects for the second lead. For example:—

Queen then knave, shows four in suit, and denies the 9.

Queen then 10, shows five in suit, possibly the 9 included.

Queen then 9, shows the knave, 10 only remaining.



1.—A leads qu ; C plays k ; B plays ace ; D plays 4.

If B returns the suit, he leads the 9, not the 3, for A being marked with the knave, 10, B's 9, 8 are virtually second and third best cards, and by so playing he is only following the accepted play (see Chapter XXI., The Return). If B returns the trey he blocks A's suit, if A next leads (third round) the knave.

2.—A leads 10 ; C discards or trumps ; B plays 8 ; D plays 6.

B prepares to unblock on the second round. If B plays the 3, he may block the suit.

3.—A leads kn ; C discards or trumps ; B plays 9 ; D plays 7.

A's suit is now cleared. If A had followed the qu with knave, B would then have played the 3.

B, wishing to lead trumps, holding ace, king and any two small cards, is strong enough to take the queen with king, even if C renounces.

With ace, knave and two small, B cannot afford to win the queen or play knave—if C is void,—and must either abandon the call or the unblocking play ; but if C follows suit to the queen, B can safely take with ace, as D can have, at most, but three cards in the suit.

With ace, 10 and two small cards, B wishing to call and unblock may safely play the 10 if C follows suit to the queen, but not if C renounces.

With king and three small cards, to queen led, B can safely play his second-best card, if he wishes to call for trumps.

B, with any four cards smaller than the queen, can always afford to play his second-best card to the queen led, if he desires to call for trumps.

B's play is based upon the assumption that A has led from a suit of at least four cards. Forced leads from

queen and two small, or from queen, knave, 10 only, being exceptional are not considered.

Knave Led Originally.

When knave is led as an original lead, the leader has either ace, king, queen, knave and one or more small, or king, queen, knave, and two or more small.

With ace and more than three small cards, B plays his lowest card to the kn, unless he wishes to obtain the lead, or call for trumps.

With ace and three small cards, B plays his third-best card, and to the second round the second-best, and is marked with ace and one small.

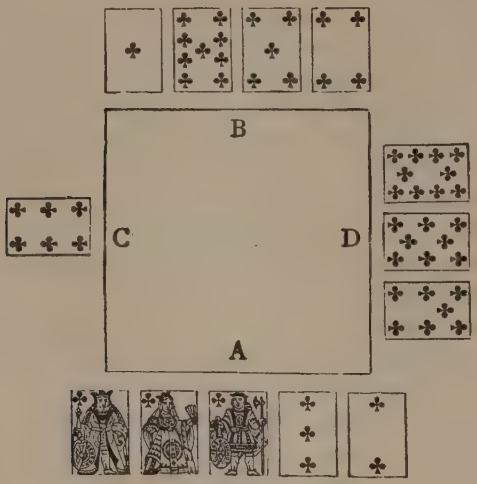
So long as B retains the ace he is marked with at *least* one small card, and when B plays the ace he has but *one* small card remaining, except, of course, when B plays ace the first round—when he may have no more—or when, desirous of stopping the lead, he plays ace on knave, and then leads trumps, in which event he may be long in the suit.

With ace and two small cards, B plays small to knave, and to the second round the ace, if C follows suit. In the event of A leading queen after knave—showing at least six in suit,—B plays ace to the second trick whether C discards or trumps, as D can have but two cards of the suit, one of which will fall, and A's king will draw the other; but if A leads king after knave, C renouncing, B plays small, for if he throws the ace D may be left with the 10 guarded, and a trick be lost. If however, B has the 10, he plays the ace, and A reads him with the 10, for when B played small to the knave he was marked with at least one small, and when to the second trick he throws the ace—C renouncing,—he

notifies A that his small card is the 10, or otherwise the ace would not have been played.

With ace and one small card, B plays ace to knave led—if C follows suit; if C discards or trumps, B plays his small card.

If B, after the second round, discards from the suit, holding ace and one small card, he discards the ace that he may not block the suit. B's discard of the ace will not deceive A, for when B played small to the second trick he was marked with the ace and at least one small. For example:—



1.—A leads kn; C plays 6; B plays 5; D plays 7.

The 4 not falling, A reads B with four of the suit originally—unless some one is calling.

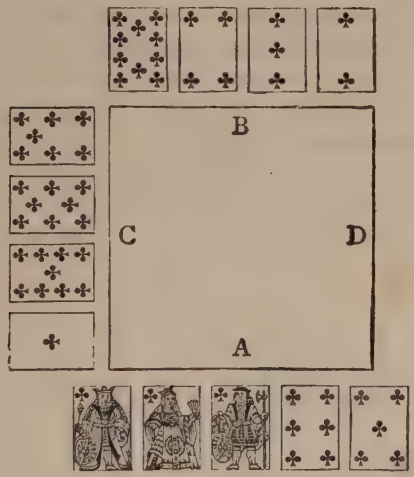
2.—A leads k; C trumps; B plays 9; D plays 8.

A now knows that B has the ace, 4, and D the 10 single, and B gives A the queen and two small, and if he

subsequently discards from the suit, he throws the ace, and A's suit is cleared.

With four small cards, B plays his third-best card to kn led—retaining his lowest card, and his subsequent play is the same as when queen is led (*see* analysis of Third-Hand Play—queen led).

B holding four small cards, may be forced to abandon his unblocking tactics on the third round, when either C or D is void of the suit. As :—



1.—A leads kn; C plays ace; B plays 3; D discards.

Now suppose that trumps come out and A leads—

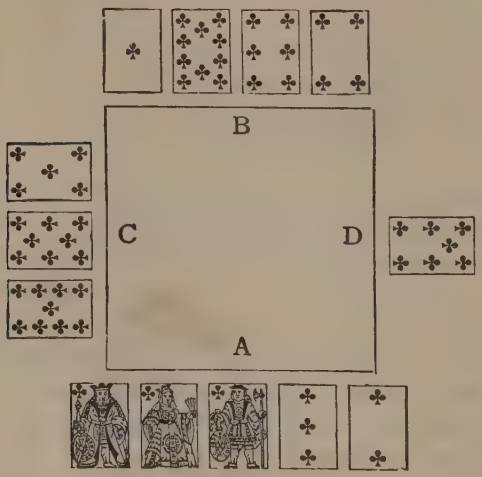
2.—A leads k; C plays 7; B plays 4; D discards.

3.—A leads qu; C plays 8; B plays 2; D discards.

B throws the 2, not the 10, for it is certain that C has the 9. Had A followed kn with qu, then B would have thrown the 10 to A's third lead, as in this case C could have no more of the suit, as the play shows that A held six of the suit originally.

When B has none of the suit he passes the kn led—discarding from his weakest suit. It is assumed that A will not—as an original lead—lead kn from kn, 10, 9, etc., and that the lead is from quart major or tierce to king, and B, of course, will not trump the kn unless his hand is invincible.

When knave is led, and all follow suit to the first round, B, holding any four cards, knows that A can take care of the suit unassisted, as C or D can have at the most but three cards of the suit. This being the case B plays his four cards with the single purpose of getting out of A's way, and at the same time to inform A that he held originally four cards of the suit. A can very often read on the first round of the suit that B has either four cards of the suit, or that he cannot have exactly four. In either case, this may be valuable information—if not in a positive, at least in a negative way. Take the following example :—



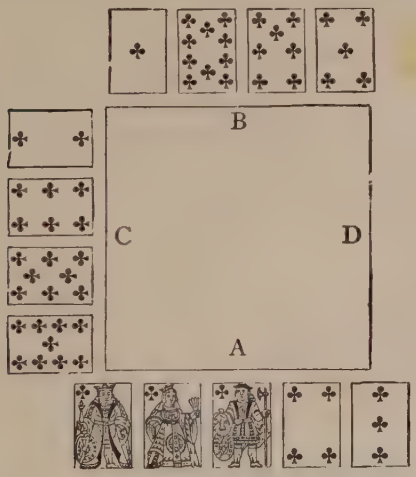
1.—A leads kn; C plays 5; B plays 6; D plays 7.

If no one is calling, A knows that B has ace, 4 and one other card of the suit remaining, and he knows that if he continues the suit, that the chances are that either C or D will trump. Give D the 10 in the above case, and then:—

1.—A leads kn; C plays 5; B plays 4; D plays 7.

It is improbable that B held five cards of the suit, and it is certain that he has not exactly four cards, consequently A gives B ace and one small card and knows that, unless one of the opponents held four cards of the suit, it will run twice.

B holding ace and three small cards, A leading the kn, will rarely, if ever, be forced to abandon his unblocking tactics, if A plays properly. For example:—



1.—A leads kn; C plays 2; B plays 7; D trumps.

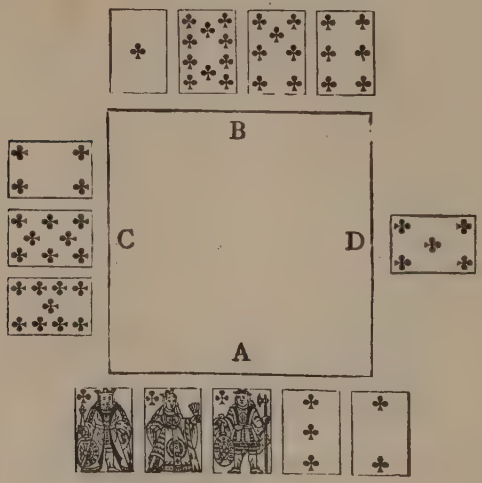
As before stated, B cannot possibly lose by continuing

his unblocking play—holding four cards,—if all follow to the first round; and in case C or D is void—A following kn with qu—he still cannot lose, as A can exhaust the opponents unassisted. But when A shows but five in all, C or D renouncing to the first round, it is then incumbent upon A to so play at trick three, that B may give up command.

2 (A to lead).—A leads k; C plays 6; B plays 10.

B is marked with ace and one small, and, if A next leads the suit, he plays the 3; if he goes on with the qu, B must throw the 5 (or lose a trick), and the suit is blocked. If B leads the suit he leads the ace, and if led by C, B plays ace, and A's suit is cleared.

B wishing to call for trumps, holding four of the suit (A leading the kn), plays his second-best card to the first trick, and cannot possibly lose by the play, if C follows suit. Take this case:—



1.—A leads kn; C plays 4, B plays 10; D plays 5.

A can read absolutely that B is calling and leads a trump at once; for it is highly improbable that the ace is held up by the opponents, consequently must be with B. If B had ace, 10 only he would have played ace and returned the 10; if he had ace, 10 and one small—not calling,—he would have played the small card; he did not win the trick because he wished a strengthening trump from A. Had B played the 7—beginning the call—A could not have read the play, and A going on with the suit permitting D to trump, to the probable loss of several tricks.

It is taken for granted that the knave is not led from kn, 10, 9 etc. If the knave is lead from tierce to knave, B cannot afford to unblock or sacrifice a high card in calling, unless his four cards are all smaller than the knave.

Ten Led Originally.

(But *see* Appendix A.)

When the 10 is led as an original lead, the leader has king, kn, 10 and one or more small cards.

With ace, qu and more than two small cards, B plays his lowest card to the 10—unless he is desirous of obtaining the lead.

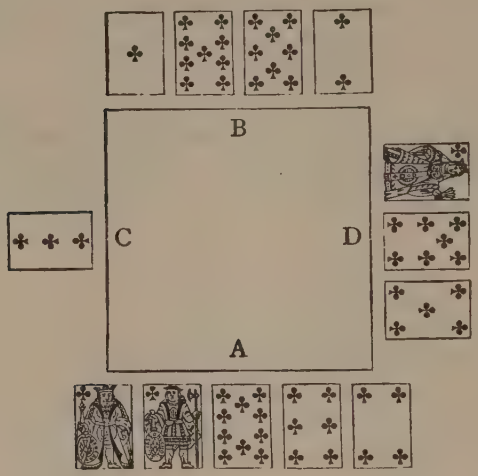
With ace, qu and two small cards, B plays his third-best card to the 10, and the qu to the next small card led, and shows ace and one small card remaining.

With ace, qu and one small card, B plays small to the 10, and to the second round throws the ace, and is marked with the qu only.

With ace, qu only, B plays the ace to the 10, and if expedient returns the qu at once and can have no more.

With ace and any number of small cards, B plays the

ace to the 10, leaving A the option of the finesse of kn on the second round. After winning with the ace, B, if he returns the suit, leads the higher of two, the lowest of more than two cards; unless, however, B holds the 9, 8 and one small, in which event he returns the 9. B's object in returning the 9 is twofold, as the following illustration demonstrates:—



1.—A leads 10; C plays 3; B plays ace; D plays 5.

2.—B leads 2; D plays 7; A plays kn; C trumps.

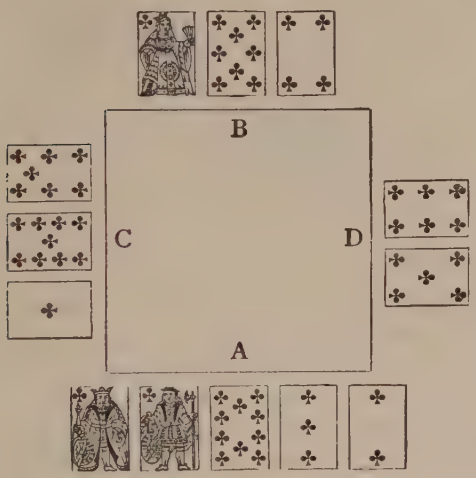
A finesses kn, for if C has qu he must also have one more at least, as with qu and one small he would have put up the qu first round. Now, suppose trumps come out, and A goes on with the suit, he must lead k, and B blocks A's suit. Had B returned the 9, A's suit would have been cleared; besides the return of the

9 gives A the option of passing if he does not wish the lead.

With qu and more than three small cards, B plays his smallest card to the 10.

With qu and three small cards, B plays his third-best card to the 10, and the second round his middle card, and is marked with the qu and one small.

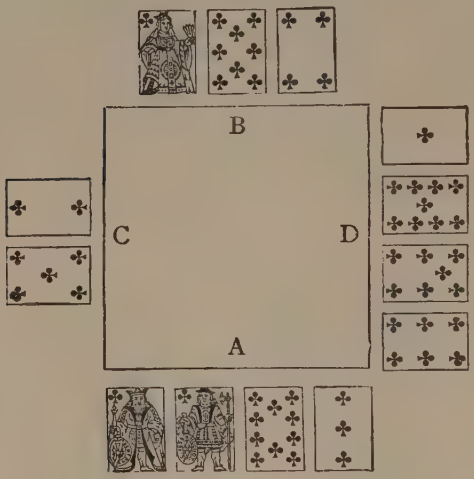
With qu and two small cards, B plays his smallest card to the 10, and to the second round the qu, provided, however, that A shows five cards, or the fall would indicate that he has five cards at least in the suit. As:—



1.—A leads 10; C plays ace; B plays 4; D plays 5.

2. (A to lead).—A leads k; C plays 7; B plays qu; D plays 6.

B unblocks, as A is marked with the trey and deuce and the 9, if against, is unguarded. Again:—



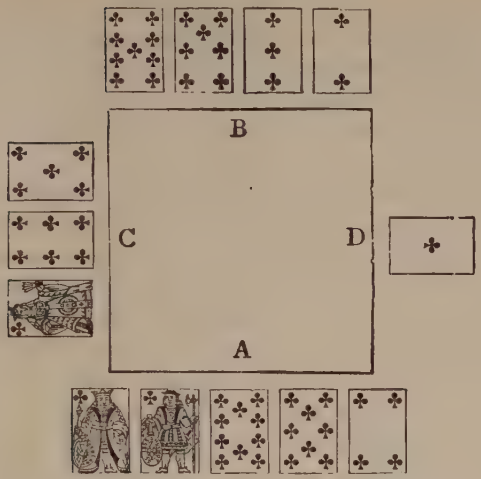
1.—A leads 10; C plays 2; B plays 4; D plays ace.

2. (A to lead).—A leads k; C plays 5; B plays 8; D plays 6.

B must play the 8 or he makes D's 9 good.

With any four small cards (all lower than the 10), B plays his third-best card to the 10—retaining his lowest card.

When B retains his lowest card to the 10 led, his subsequent play is subject to the rules governing the unblocking game (*see* page 161). Here, also, B may be forced to abandon his unblocking tactics on the third round of the suit. As:—



1.—A leads 10; C plays 5; B plays 3; D plays ace.

2. (A to lead).—A leads k; C plays 6; B plays 7; D trumps.

3. (A to lead).—A leads kn; C plays qu; B plays 2; D discards.

B cannot place the 8 with A. C may have the 8, and if B throws the 9 a trick may be lost. A was culpably negligent here, and by a bad play forced B to abandon his unblocking game. The deuce, not coming out in the two rounds, was marked with B, who must consequently have either the qu or 9, and A should have led the 8 at trick 3; in which event B would have played the 9 and A's suit would have been cleared. Not infrequently bad play on the part of A leaves B in the dark unnecessarily, and forces him to block A's suit. When A can read that B has retained his lowest card, he should, as in this instance, so play to the third round of the suit that B may read him with the command, so that he

may be enabled to pursue his unblocking tactics. As before pointed out, the great advantage of the unblocking game is that it very often enables the leader to count the hands. To reap full returns, the leader must be ever on the alert to note the absence of a small card from the fall after the second round.

With none of the suit, B passes the 10, unless covered by C, and, even in this event, B may find it to his advantage to pass, holding four trumps and a good hand besides. The character of his hand, and the state of the score, must determine for B the advisability of passing the 10, when void of the suit, C having covered.

In regard to B calling for trumps, the 10 led, he can always afford to play his second-best card the first round, holding four small cards. If B has any card higher than the 10, *i. e.*, the ace or queen, it is assumed that, if he desires trumps led, he will cover the 10, thus making an effort to gain the lead.

Nine Led Originally.

(But *see* Appendix A.)

The 9 is led as an original lead from two combinations, and, like the king, proclaims exactly four in suit—ace, queen, 10, 9, or ace, knave, 10, 9.

B, holding any four cards of the suit, cannot block A, but he should retain his lowest card, the first round—playing his third-best, if he does not attempt to take the trick or desire to call. It is assumed that A, as the first lead of all, will not lead the 9 from any combination except the ones given above. In rare cases A may lead, even as the first lead of the hand, from 9 and two small ones, and even in this event B has nothing to gain by playing the court card, holding queen or knave and others; for if the lead is from 9 and two small, B hold-

ing knave and two or three small ones, is not likely to make a trick in the suit with the ace, king, queen, 10 all against. Putting up the knave the first round would simply establish the suit at once for the opponents. P has nothing to gain by playing his third-best card first round—holding exactly four cards of the suit, as unblocking is concerned, but as a matter of ing valuable information to A, the play may b advantage. The play of the third-best quently enables A to place all th first round, and nearly alw is of much greater unblocking feature o ing:—

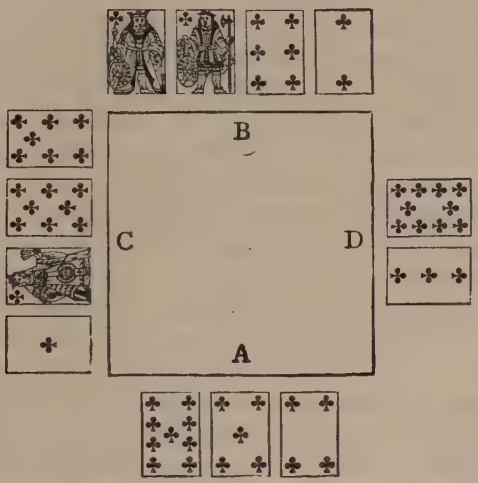
1.—A leads 9;

Now, barring taking it for grar

from the fall that B has the k, kn, 2 exactly of the suit, and this may prove of great advantage to A, if not in a positive at least in a negative way; for if the play of this suit is discontinued—A leading trumps or opening nother suit, B is marked with these three cards. Sub- uently A may be able to read what B *cannot* have by ing what he *must* have. This position will repay To begin with, the king cannot be with B unless for, if it were otherwise, he must have should have no card outranking knave, 8, or he would have riginally knave, 8, 7, or e put on knave; for e or two small cards— ould play knave. If nake, and if with D ve had exactly four g. B cannot have d at most king, 7. on the 9 led. B n the 6 and the 6 cannot be the originally king, 7 ayed king; these then B must have d from the fall to e yet in hand ; C ssibly the 8 also. turned the deuce, of the suit, even A could then read, other card but B's tion to A, and it is e able to place the

suit the very first round while he yet has possession of the lead.

On the other hand suppose the lead of the 9 was a forced lead from 9 and two small, as:—



1.—A leads 9; C plays 7; B plays k; D plays 3.

2.—B leads 2; D plays 10; A plays 4; C plays 8.

Here C D have three tricks in the suit by easy play no matter who next leads the suit. Now, let B play as first suggested:—

1.—A leads 9; C plays 7; B plays 6; D plays 10.

And B must make one trick—possibly two. Trans-

pose the cards as you may, B cannot well lose by passing the 9.

B holding king, queen; king, knave; queen or knave, four in suit, cannot possibly lose by playing the third-best to the 9 led—if the lead is not forced, and by the play may afford A very important information that no other play will yield. Not one hand in perhaps fifty justifies an irregular lead as the first of all, and perhaps not one in a hundred that would call for the 9 as the best of three, or from any other combinations except the conventional ones; and even then it is about an even chance that the play of second hand in conjunction with the cards B holds will show that the lead is forced, and he will, of course, play accordingly.

With king, queen and more than two small cards, B plays his smallest card to the 9, unless he is desirous of gaining the lead.

With king, queen and two small cards, B plays his third-best card to the 9, and to the second round the queen, and is marked with king and one small card.

With king, queen and one small card, B plays queen to 9, and returns king, and has one more or no more.

With king, knave and two small cards, B plays his third-best card to the 9, and the knave to the second round and is marked with king and one small.

With king, knave and one small card B plays small to 9 led, and to the second round the king, and must have the knave single.

With king, knave only, B plays king and returns the knave, and can have no more.

With queen or knave and any three small cards, B plays his third-best card to the 9, and to the second round his second-best card, and is marked with the court card and one small card.

With queen or knave and any two small cards, B plays small and next the court card and shows one small only.

With queen or knave and one small card, B plays the court card and returns the small card, and can have no more.

With any four small cards, B plays his third-best card to the 9 and his subsequent play is as directed in previous analyses.

With none of the suit, B should—usually—pass the 9 if C does not cover.

With any four cards smaller than the 9, B can safely sacrifice his second-best card the first round if he wishes to call, and if he wants to lead trumps, he will cover the 9, if holding a court card. If B wins the 9 and then leads trumps, he can give no information as to the number of cards he may have of the suit. If B does not make an effort to win the 9, the inference is that he does not wish to lead trumps, or that he has no court card in the suit; consequently if the 9 wins B is not calling, for if B has no court card the 9 will not win, and holding a court card in the suit he would have made an effort to get the lead. This inference is subject to the qualification that B might prefer a trump led from A; but this would be exceptional as if B is strong enough to want trumps led he could hardly afford to risk two rounds of the suit in order to complete the call.

Eight Led Originally.

The rank of the low card led, and the follow of second hand, has much to do with the play of third hand, who will put up his best card, finesse, or pass the trick accordingly. Few players give the attention that is due to the rank of the cards. The higher the rank of the

low card led the more information it discloses; consequently third hand in turn can often give partner by well-judged finesse, or by passing the trick, very valuable information that unskillful play will withhold.

When an 8 or lower card is led originally, third hand gives the leader credit for three cards in the suit, all higher than the one first led. In other words, the leader has not a high-card combination in the suit, and has led his *fourth-best* card. Third hand further infers—barring a suit of tenaces or an exceptional hand—that the suit the leader has selected, as the one to open first of all, is the strongest plain suit he possesses, viewed in the light of high card and numerical strength combined.

To the low card led, B is supposed, ordinarily, to play his best card, if needed. (For finessing in partner's suit, *see* chapter on Finesse.) B is also supposed to win the trick as cheaply as possible; that is to say, if he has cards in sequence, he plays the lowest of the sequence, as with qu, kn, 10, he plays 10, unless he wishes to call for trumps. When B's cards are all lower than the card led, or lower than the card played by C, he plays his lowest card; or if B's higher cards are in sequence with the card led he likewise plays his lowest card—as the 6 led, C playing the 5, B holding 9, 8, 7, 4 plays 4. Even the best players are often sadly remiss in the play of third hand when a fourth-best card is led. It not infrequently happens that B can read the exact combination from which A has led, and by passing the trick he imparts very valuable information. For illustration: If A leads the 8—*plain suit*,—third hand with any of the following holdings should pass the trick, as finesse is absurd, and the play of the best unnecessary unless third hand wishes to make an effort to get into possession of the lead for a particular purpose. Third hand

holding any of the following combinations, with or without any smaller card:—

and others,

and others,

and others,

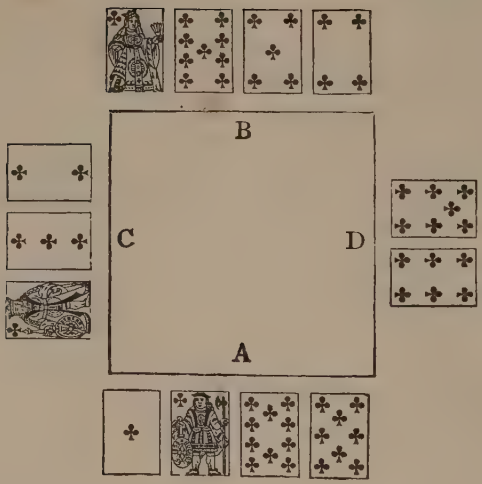
and others,

and others,

Plays his lowest card to the 8 led by partner.

To finesse or put up the best card is useless, as the 8 is as likely to win the trick as any card third hand may play. In each instance the ace or king *must* be against, and the 8 either forces its play or wins the trick, and if

third hand properly passes, the information it affords is very valuable. How often it occurs that third hand puts up his best card, with these holdings as if intent upon keeping partner in the dark. Suppose the following:—



1.—A leads 8; C plays 2; B plays 4; C plays 6.
Mark what A can read; D has the 7 or no more, or is

calling. C cannot have both king and queen, as he would then have played qu; B cannot have the k unless he has also the qu, 9, for with k, 9 only or k, qu only he would not have passed the trick; B must have the 9 if he has the qu, otherwise he would have put up qu, consequently B has either k, qu, 9 or qu, 9, and C must have the k or no high card. Suppose on the other hand—

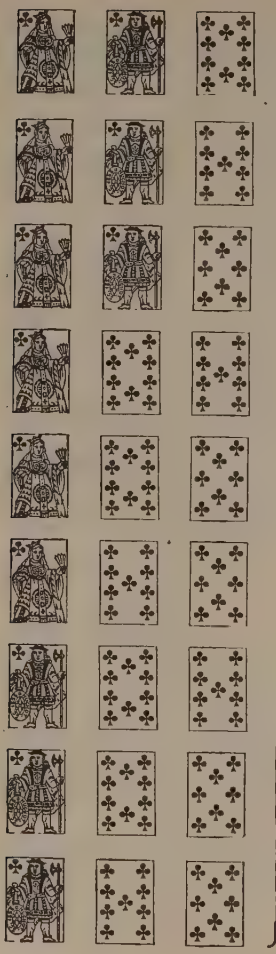
1.—A leads 8; C plays 2; B plays qu; D plays 6.

The only inference A can draw is that D has not the king; for aught he can tell, C may have the other six cards of the suit, and all because B played as if he had never heard of the "fourth-best card." You must pay respect to the rank of the cards. It is understood, of course, that if A leads the 8 late in hand, when he may be underplaying, holding both ace and king, for instance, or when the 8 may be the best card he has of the suit, B does not pass, but puts up his best card.

Seven Led Originally.

So, also, with the following holdings, third hand should pass the 7 led—*plain suit*,—by partner, provided, of course, that he does not wish to make an effort to gain the lead.

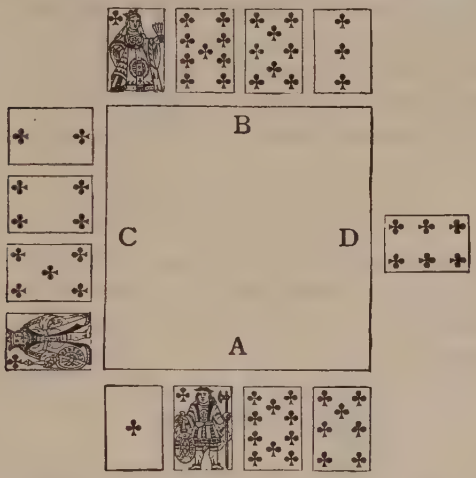
Third hand holding any of the following combinations, with or without any smaller card:—



Plays his lowest card to the 7 led by partner

In each instance the card against the 7 *must* win, no matter which card B throws, and B passing may give A

a fund of information. It must not be forgotten that here, as with the 8, B must be careful how he passes *in trumps*, for the leader is very likely to lead small from ace, k, and others, or k, qu, and others, and that the foregoing applies particularly to plain suits. As an illustration of passing the 7, suppose the following:—



1.—A leads 7; C plays 2; B plays 3; D plays 6.

B knows that the ace, k, kn, 10 are the cards in the suit higher than the 7, and that A must hold either ace, kn, 10 or k, kn, 10; if the latter, he would have opened with the 10 and not the 7, consequently he *must* have the former, and the k only is against. The 7 wins, and winning tells the story. But suppose:—

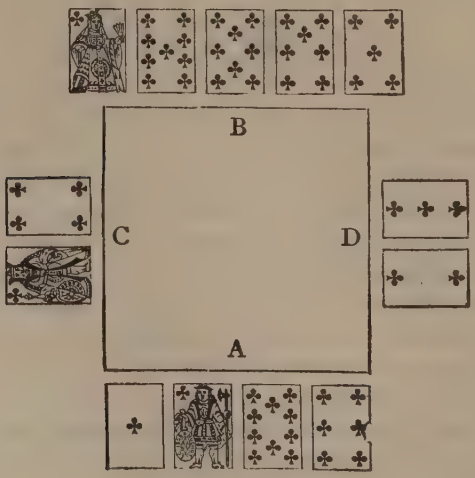
1.—A leads 7; C plays 2; B plays qu; D plays 6.

A here cannot surmise how the suit lies; D could have the 9, 8, or C could have the k, 9, 8 and others, or the control may be with B. You can readily see what a vast difference this might make in A's game. Care, great

care, and thoughtful work is necessary to get all out of the fourth-best principle that there is in it. It matters not that you may not hold any one of the nine combinations, in the last tabulation, in a dozen hands—the 7 led—but in the thirteenth hand you may, and you should not miss the opportunity to play it properly. The Grand Coup may never come to you, yet you are on the alert to play it, if it ever comes. As you descend in the scale, the fourth-best card becomes, in a measure, less informatory, and it requires a more exceptional distribution of the suit to enable partner to finesse or pass with safety.

Six Led Originally.

It is, however, in the exceptional hands that the moderate player not infrequently becomes lost, or makes some bad play, and throws away a great game. Here is an example:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays 4; B plays qu; D plays 2.

B thoughtlessly plays the queen, and it may cost him no less than six tricks. B should have played the 5, knowing that the 6 must force the king or win the trick. Let this be the diamond suit, B's other cards being qu, kn, 10, 7, hearts; ace, qu, 7, 3, clubs (trumps); and no spade. Now, suppose that B goes in to make the diamond suit—and this would be about in keeping with his play of the qu—leading the 3 of clubs. If he finds D with kn, 10 and three other spades; four small hearts, and the 9, 8 clubs. A with ace, k and a small heart; three small spades; kn, 10, 2 of clubs. C, ace, k, qu and two other spades; two small hearts; king and three small trumps—A B will escape with the bare odd card. If B passes *four* rounds of spades A B make three by cards. On the other hand if B properly passes the 6, A,—seeing that at least one more round will establish the diamonds, and having reëntry cards in hearts—at once leads the kn of clubs, and A B take every trick, a gain of six tricks. The one absolutely wrong play costs B six tricks.

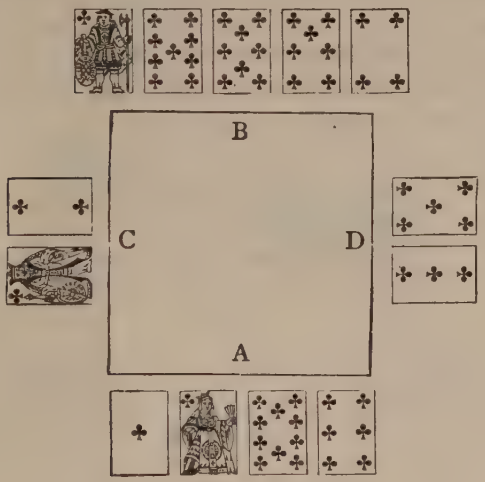
The leader leading the 6—*plain suit*,—third hand holding any of the following ten combinations, should pass the 6—throwing a smaller card if he has one, mainly as a matter of information to partner, which may prove of great value.

Third hand holding any of the following combinations, with or without any smaller card—

Plays his lowest card to the 6 led by partner.

In each instance the 6 is as good as any card third hand holds, and the 6 will either win the trick or force the ace or king.

When B can read the exact combination that A has led from, and knows that he must be longer in the suit than A, he passes the card led for a double purpose: first—as has been pointed out,—that the leader may read the hands, and, second—that B may not block his own suit. Take this case:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays 2; B plays 4; D plays 3.

B can count the cards in A's hands and knows that he has led from ace, qu, 10, 6 *only*, and that the king only is against. If B puts up the kn he hopelessly blocks his own suit and needlessly keeps A in the dark. As soon as A dropped the 6, B knew that he was longer in the

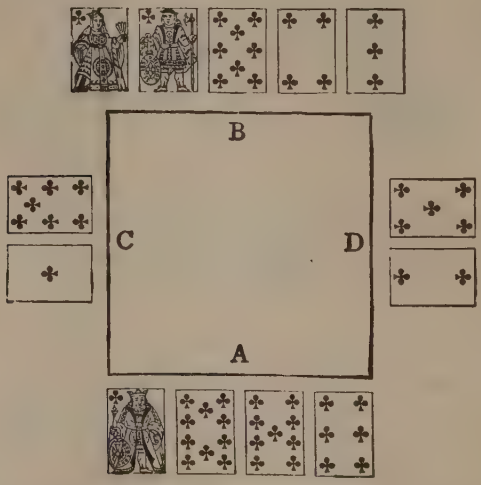
suit than A, for if A had held five or more in suit he would have opened with the ace.

2.—A leads ace; C plays k; B plays 7; D plays 5.

If trumps come out and A goes on with this suit, he leads qu; and if next led by B, he leads the 8, A wins with queen and returns the 10, and B will make his small card.

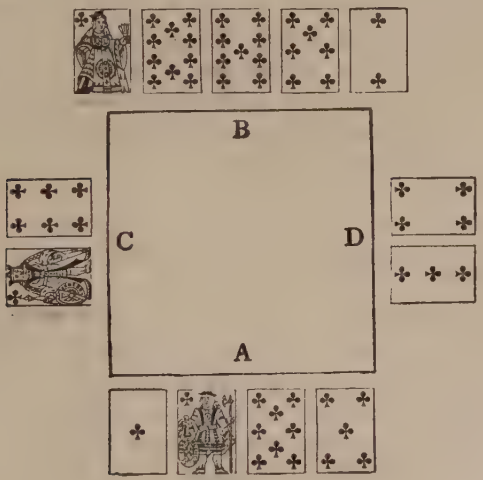
The *fourth-best* card is selected for the express purpose of publishing information. C at second hand is supposed to take advantage of the information when in his power to do so, and if B does not make all the use of it possible, the opponents reap the advantage in the end.

When second hand covers, the card he plays may enable B to read A's hand, whereas otherwise he could not. Take this case:—



3.—A leads 6; C plays 7; B plays 8; D plays 2.

C, covering the 6 with 7, enables B to read at once that A has led from either ace, 10, 9, 6 or king, 10, 9, 6, and he plays the 8, not the knave, and the 8 winning the trick informs A that B has the queen, knave or ace, qu, kn, and that C has the ace or no more, or is possibly calling. Had C not covered with the 7, B must have played kn as the 7 might then be with D. Had B played kn, then A could not have placed a single card in the suit, as, so far as he could read, C could hold ace, qu, 8. In the first case he knows on the very first round that one more round, at least, will establish the suit; in the second he cannot read for a certainty another trick in the suit. Again:—



1.—A leads 5; C plays 6; B plays 7; D plays 3.
C playing the 6, B reads that A has led from either

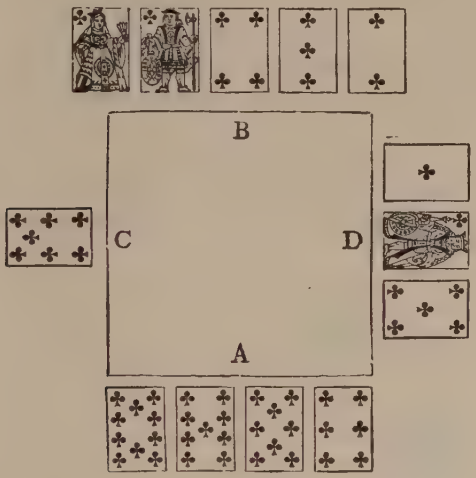
ace, kn, 8 or k, kn, 8, and in either case his 7 holds the trick or forces the play of the single court card that is against. Mark how informatory the play is. D has the 4 or no more. B must have the qu, 10, 9, possibly the king also, and C has the king single, or void. If, on the other hand, B plays qu, A cannot place a single unplayed card, as in this case the k, 10, 9 could be with C, and the deuce only with B.

The point is, that whenever B can read the combination which A has led from, or when he can read that it must be one of two or three combinations, he plays the lowest card that will either win the trick or force the play of a card from D higher in rank than his best card. This is not finesse, it is simply playing the lowest of two or more cards in sequence. If B knows that A, for instance, has the king, queen, B has virtually a quint sequence, holding the ace, kn, 10 and the 10 as a trick-maker is just as valuable as the ace, and B plays these three cards, if practicable, in such a manner, that A may read that he has them at the earliest moment.

Low Card Led Originally.

When a low card is led originally, B, with any number of cards, is supposed to play a card sufficiently high to win the trick, if in his power, and, as has been pointed out, this may not necessarily be his highest card. (Finesse is not considered. Instructions in finesse will be found in the chapter devoted to that feature of third-hand play.) When third hand makes an effort to win the first round of the suit—a low card being led—his play to the second round may be modified by the fall of the cards. When it is evident that A commands the suit, B will, of course,

play to unblock, if he holds blocking cards. If, on the contrary, it develops that B is longer in the suit than A, B will play to keep control when he can do so, and not endanger the loss of a trick. Take this case:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays 7; B plays kn; D plays k.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 8; C discards; B plays 2; D plays ace.

Here, upon the second round, B reads that A has 10, 9 only remaining, and that D has the ace, 5, and consequently B plays to keep control of the suit that A may not block him. If B puts up the qu, he blocks his suit.

As B does not necessarily play his best card the second round, neither does he always play his lowest card. If the play develops the fact that A has the numerical strength, B with blocking cards—while he may not find

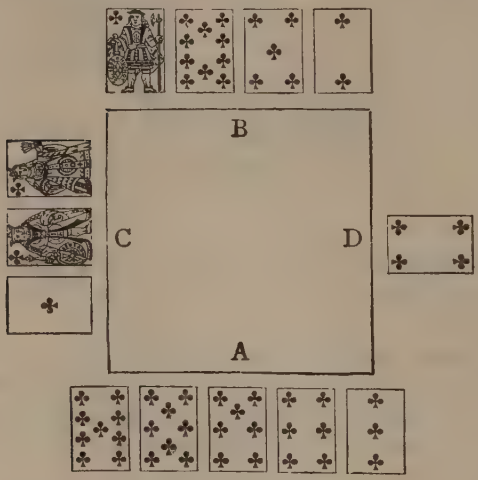
it practicable to play his highest card,—may play his middle card—retaining his lowest. In the preceding example, if A has the 5, D the 4, leaving B the qu, kn, 3, 2 then:—

1.—A leads 6; C plays 7; B plays kn; D plays k.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 5; C discards; B plays 2; D plays ace.

A can read that B has the qu and at least the trey or 4, for B would have played the qu, holding qu, deuce only.

When to a low card led, C plays a card higher than B can cover, B must play his lowest card, no matter what it is or how many cards he may have. As:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays qu; B plays 2; D plays 4.

Now, if A next leads the suit, he leads the 3, and a suit of five cards is proclaimed, and B knows that two

cards only are with the opponents, and he should prepare to unblock. As:—

2.—A leads 3; C plays k; B plays 10; D renounces.

When A showed five in suit by the lead of the 3 after 6, he requested B not to block his suit, and B playing the 10 is simply doing what A has requested him to do and the play should not deceive A.

3 (C to lead).—C leads ace; B plays kn; D renounces; A plays 7.

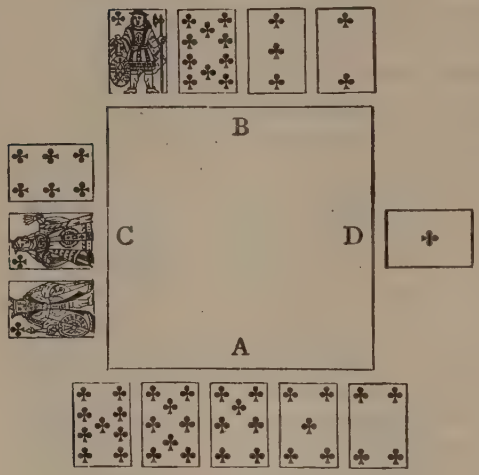
A's suit is cleared. Had B played the 5 to the second round, this would not have been the case.

When B prepares to unblock on the second round, he must throw the higher of his two remaining cards on the third round. Likewise, if he discards from the suit, he must play the higher card. If B's three cards are such that he cannot possibly block, or if they are cards of equal value that must block no matter how he may play, he should then in both instances play his lowest remaining card to the second round. For instance, if B's three cards are the 5, 4, 3 he plays from the lowest up, and if after playing to the first round he is left with say kn, 10, 9, he must likewise play the lowest card to the second round. B only prepares to unblock on the second round—by playing his middle card—when his cards may block A's suit, and when by playing his middle card he may avoid blocking A. As soon as A shows more than four cards B should play to unblock, if he has blocking cards, but not otherwise.

It is just as important for B to unblock in a suit that A has opened with a low card, as it is when A opens a suit with a high card; for in such cases the unblocking play is made for the purpose of bringing in the small card or cards of the suit. A few examples illustrating unblocking play on the part of B, when a low card is

led, will make this evident and clearly show its advantages.

Unblocking on the Second Round.

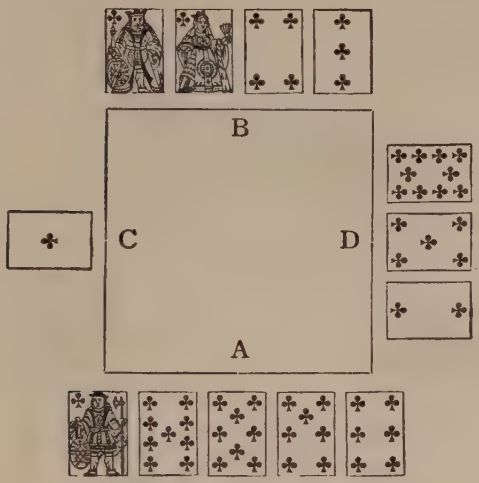


1.—A leads 5; C plays qu; B plays 2; D plays ace.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 4; C plays k; B plays 10; D discards.

A shows five in suit, and B having blocking cards prepares to get out of the way, by playing his middle card. If C now leads the 6, B plays kn; if B next leads the suit, or discards from it, the knave is thrown, and if led

by A, B plays kn and A's suit is freed. If B plays the trey to the second round, A's suit is blocked. Again:—

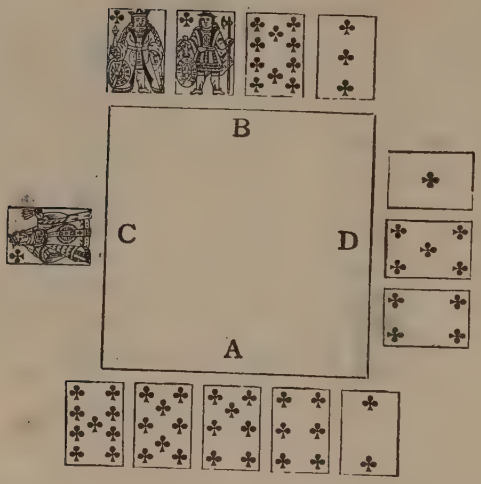


1.—A leads 7; C plays ace; B plays 3; D plays 2.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 6; C trumps; B plays qu; D plays 5.

If B plays the 4, A's suit of five is blocked. Note that the play of the queen does not deceive A; on the contrary, B's unblocking play of the qu, in this instance, enables A to place the suit; for if B held qu, 4 only, he would not have played the qu; if the qu, 10, 4, he would have played the 10, consequently the k, 4 are marked in B's hand and the 10 in D's. D cannot have the k un-

less he began a call upon the second round, holding k, 10, 5, 4, 2, originally of the suit. When the suit is next led, B plays king, and A's suit is cleared. Or again:—

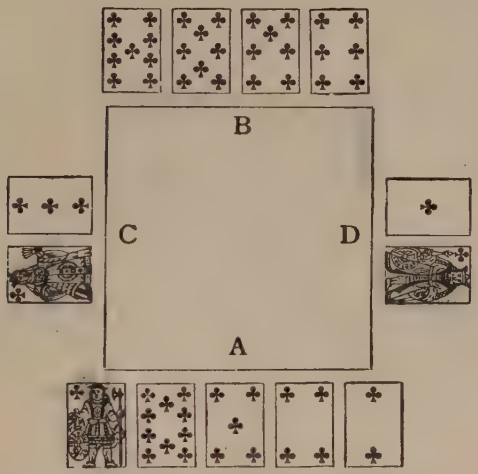


1.—A leads 6; C plays qu; B plays k; D plays ace.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 2; C trumps; B plays 10; D plays 4.

B is marked with the knave, 3, D the 5. When the suit is next led, B plays knave, and, if he discards from

the suit, he throws the kn, and A's suit is unblocked. Once more:—



1.—A leads 4; C plays 3; B plays 6; D plays k.

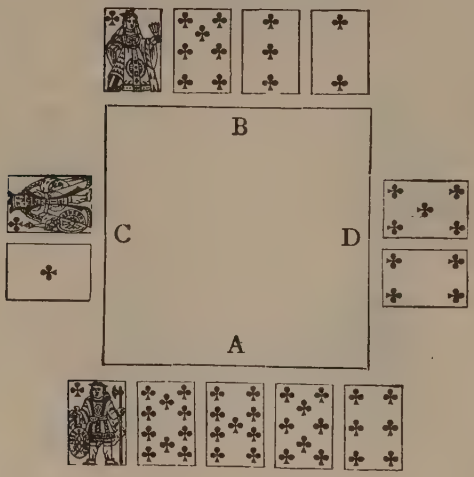
2.—D leads ace; A plays 2; C plays qu; B plays 7.

Here B plays his lowest card although A has shown a suit of five cards, for B's three cards are in sequence. If they block A's suit, no play will avoid it, and any card but the lowest may possibly deceive A, where there is no occasion for it.

Unblocking on the Third Round.

When third hand holds exactly four cards, one high and three small ones, he may find it expedient to unblock on the third round.

Suppose the following case:—



1.—A leads 8; C plays k; B plays 2; D plays 4.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 10; C plays ace; B plays 3; D plays 5.

3 (A to lead).—A leads 9; C trumps; B plays qu; D discards.

A, by the lead of the 10 after 8, shows the quart to

knave and one small, and B properly plays the qu to the third round and clears the suit for A. It may happen that A does not lead a lower card on the second round than he did on the first, but, if B can read that he has five or more, he plays to unblock either on the second or third round of the suit. B will unblock, though he may hold only three cards of the suit originally. Take the example last illustrated, giving A the trey also, and then:—

1.—A leads 8; C plays k; B plays 2; D plays 4.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 9; C plays ace; B plays qu; D plays 5.

A shows the quart sequence, six in suit, and B gets rid of the command by throwing the queen. A cannot place the 7, but showing B six in suit, he should read that B would play just as he did, holding the qu, 7. Besides, if B plays the 7, A is in the dark as to the location of the queen, and his suit is blocked.

SUMMARY.

The salient features of the unblocking game may be summed up as follows:—

High Card Led Originally.

1. When ace, queen, knave, ten or nine is led originally, third hand with any four cards of the suit exactly, plays his third-best card to the first round—retaining his lowest card.

2. If leader, second or fourth hand continues the suit, third hand plays his second best card.

3. To the third round, third hand plays the higher or

lower of his two remaining cards, as the fall to the previous rounds may demand.

4. If third hand returns the suit—having played his third-best to the first trick—he leads the highest of his three remaining cards.

5. If third hand discards from the suit, he discards the middle card.

6. Third hand wishing to call, and also prepare to unblock, plays his second-best card to the first trick, and his third-best card to the second round of the suit.

7. Third hand must abandon the call or the unblocking tactics, if the play of the second-best card to the first round may endanger a trick.

8. When third hand plays his third-best card to the first trick, and his second-best card to the second trick, he does not call, if he abandons his unblocking play on the third round—throwing his small card.

9. When king is led, third hand does not unblock, but plays his lowest card.

Low Card Led Originally.

10. When a lower card than the nine is led third hand, not attempting to win the trick or call for trumps, plays his lowest card to the first round.

11. To the second round of the suit third hand, holding four of the suit originally, plays his middle card—holding cards that may block the leader's suit,—if he can read at the time that the leader led from five or more cards in suit originally.

12. Third hand does not unblock on the second round of the suit, when his three cards cannot possibly block, or when they are such cards that no play will prevent them from blocking the leader's suit.

13. Third hand will unblock on the second or third round of the suit whenever the play demonstrates that the leader is longer in the suit than he is, even though he held but three cards originally, provided the unblocking play does not endanger a trick in the suit.

B's Play when A is not the Original Leader of the Hand.

So far the analysis of third hand play has been based upon the assumption that A was the original leader of the hand; consequently the card led was supposed to be strictly conventional, as prescribed in the Table of Leads, therefore, the play laid down as proper for B is all subject to this condition.

When A is not the original leader of the hand, but gains possession of the lead *early* in the play of the hand, he is supposed to lead conventionally if he opens a fresh suit, should nothing exceptional have occurred in the few rounds that have been played; and B's play in the suit proceeds upon the assumption that A has not played irregularly; *e. g.:* —

1.—C leads 4; B plays 2; D plays qu; A plays k.

If A now opens a fresh suit, he is supposed to lead the same as if he was the first of all to lead. There is nothing in the fall to this round to indicate that A would lead irregularly, and B should play much the same as if A was the original leader. If A opens a suit with a high card, B reads him for the conventional holding, and plays as explained in the previous pages.

If, however, A comes into the lead after several rounds have been played, his play must be read subject to the information the previous play has afforded. For ex-

ample: If the opponents have led trumps, and have a plain suit declared, A may lead the queen, knave or ten as a strengthening card from the highest of three for the benefit of B's supposed suit, in preference to opening his own medium strong suit. The fall of the cards to the rounds that have been played, before A gains the lead, will usually enable B to judge of the probability of irregular play upon A's part. Furthermore, if A opens with a high card like the qu, kn, 10 or 9, C's play to the card, in conjunction with the cards B has in the suit, will nearly always show if the lead be irregular.

The high-card leads, as now advised, are so pronounced in character, that B is almost always able to detect an unconventional lead. If, for example, A leads 9, B with ace or 10, or qu and kn, knows the lead is forced; or 10 led, B with k or kn; kn led, B holding qu or k, etc. A will rarely open a fresh suit with an 8 or lower card, except it is the usual fourth-best. When an 8, 7 or 6 is led as the best card of the suit, B will usually detect it, for, unless the opponents have the strength in the suit, B can read that it cannot be a fourth-best card (*see* Eight Leads, page 25), and to do this he need not have of necessity all the higher cards, as—8 led, B, with ace, 9 or 10, 9, knows the lead is forced.

Rules and maxims for play cannot be formulated to meet exceptional cases, and after the first few rounds of a hand individual ingenuity, judgment and whist perception must be exercised.

The Play in Trumps.

Third-hand play in trumps is radically different from third-hand play in plain suits. The conditions are not the same. In plain suits A plays to make his long small

cards, and B's play is to assist at the outset, and not hinder or defeat him at the finish. In trumps the long cards must make. Underplay, finesse, holding up and irregular leads and plays enter largely into the play of trumps, and inferences cannot be drawn so rigidly as in plain suits. As B cannot block A's trump suit, he consequently plays without taking this feature into consideration at all. His principal object is to assist A in exhausting the opponents, and at the same time inform A of his exact numerical strength as early in the play as possible. B is permitted to finesse much more deeply in trumps than in plain suits, from the fact that the winning trumps must make; besides, the leader will often lead from the highest of three cards. B may unblock in trumps to avoid taking the lead on the last round of trumps, or it may happen that B may block A in his effort to draw the trumps, and this B should be on the alert to avoid.

(For full analysis of third-hand play in trumps, *see* Chapters on The Echo, and Trumps.)

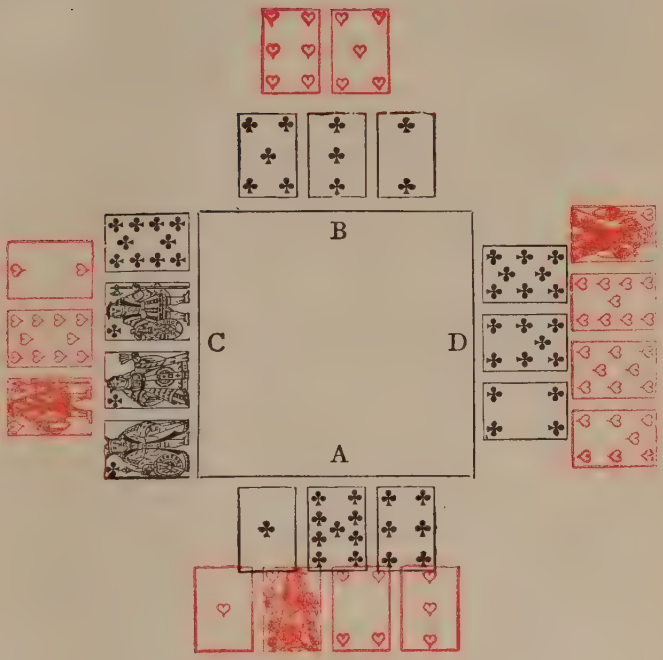
CHAPTER V.

FOURTH HAND.

THE fourth-hand player who thinks he must take every trick that comes to him, simply because he can take it, has much to learn, and much to unlearn. There is no chair at the whist table in which an automaton may sit. The player fourth hand must know when, and when not, to take. He must know that a great game is sometimes made by taking a trick his partner has already won, or passing the opportunity to take a trick although in his power to do so. It may happen that the only possible way to make or save a game, is by fourth hand passing two, three or more tricks in succession, any one of which might have been taken. Fourth hand may have to overtrump his partner's trick, or undertrump his adversary's. He may have a trump too many, or some high card that he must throw away.

A great game is often made by the insidious play and beautiful finesse of fourth hand. The student will understand that in the great majority of cases fourth hand does take the trick if he can; but it should be impressed upon his mind that he must be on the alert for the exceptional situations, so that when they come to him in practice, he may not miss the better play.

A few examples will illustrate this. Suppose this case:—



A turned 3 h; these two suits only are given, as they

will illustrate the point. D has a great suit of d; A of s.

1.—C leads k c; B plays 2; D plays 7; A plays 6.

A here refuses to take the trick; he suspects that D may be calling; and if he can induce C to lead a trump up to his major tenace, it will be to his advantage.

2.—C leads 10 c; B plays 3; D plays 4; A plays 9.

A passes again; D completes the call; C gives D the ace and 8 of clubs—B the 5.

3.—C leads kn h; B plays 5; D plays 7; A plays 3.

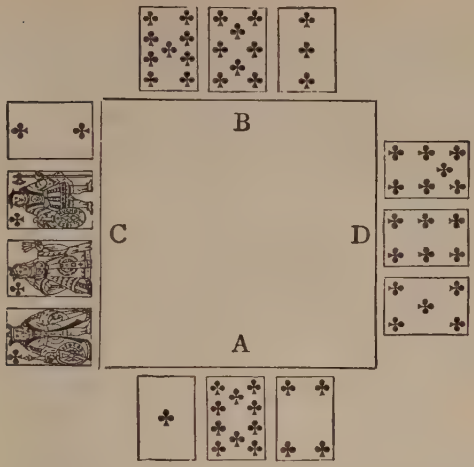
A still refuses to take, as C is unconsciously playing A's game, for A wants the trumps out that he may bring in his great spade suit.

4.—C leads 10 h; B plays 6; D plays 8; A plays 4.

A passes for the fourth time; C must have the 2 h, and he will most surely lead it, for he cannot well read A's persistent holding up.

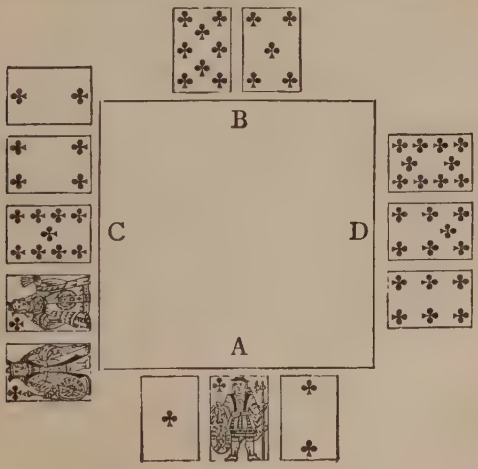
5.—C leads 2 h; B discards; D plays 9; A plays qu.

A now draws D's last trump and makes his great spade suit and the ace of clubs. This is an exaggerated case of holding up, but it illustrates the possibilities of the game. D could have countered on A's strategy in the above case by covering C's 10 with king. D should have read A's play, for *he* could give him the ace of c and the ace of h. C could not easily divine A's intent, but D could; and had he put on the k at trick four, A would have been forced to take; if he had not, D would have gone on with his diamonds forcing A. A had nothing to lose by his play, and all to gain, and D permitted it to be successful. This makes evident the fact that you must be on the alert for this strategy and meet it if in your power. Here is a simple case:—



1.—C leads k; B plays 3; D plays 5; A plays 4.

Now, if C reads D with the ace, and goes on with 2, A gains a trick; if he properly follows with kn, A does not lose by holding up the first round. Again:—

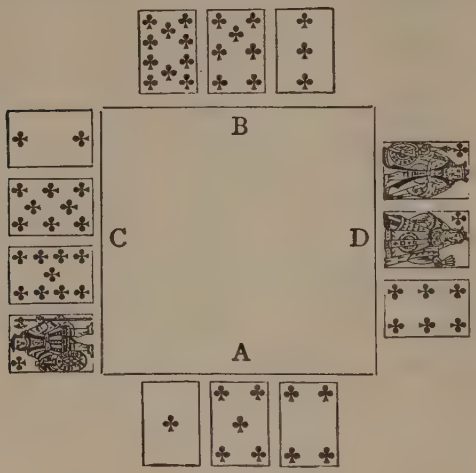


1.—C leads qu; B plays 5; D plays 6; A plays 2.

2.—C leads 4; B plays 8; D plays 10; A plays kn.

A's underplay here leaves him with the perfect tenace, and C continuing the suit gives A a trick.

Fourth hand may refuse to take the first trick if he suspects that his partner is calling. Take this case:—



1.—C leads 2; B plays 7; D plays qu; A plays 4.

2.—D leads k; A plays ace; C plays 8; B plays 3.

A is now in to answer B's request for trumps, and a great game may result. (*See* Hand V, p. 539.)

Late in hand, fourth hand may sometimes hold up to great advantage. If C, in an ending, leads the kn, hold-kn, 9, 4, A, with qu, 8, 3, must refuse to take or lose a trick.

You must bear in mind that to successfully underplay, you must have a keen perception and a full understanding of the situation. Care must be taken that you do

not carry such finesse to excess, for it is the exception, not the rule, for fourth hand to pass the trick. Most players fourth hand take the trick if they can do so, and never give the situation a thought—they seize the instant trick; the keen player is on the alert and is looking beyond the present trick for the *one* trick that may be gained by finesse—for the one trick commonplace, routine play will not yield. There is more merit in gaining a single trick—by well-judged underplay or any other species of finesse—that does not by common play belong to the cards than there is in winning a thousand games with master hands.

CHAPTER VI.

TRUMPS.

PERHAPS the most difficult problems that whist offers to the player are the management of trumps. Only most thorough and comprehensive knowledge of the game will enable a player to make the most of his trumps. Trumps are the controlling factors in the game, and their proper handling is to every whist player, no matter how proficient, a matter of profound mental concern. They are the ordnance—the heavy guns—in the engagement, and after you have silenced the enemy with them you may gather in the fruits of victory with your established suits. It follows that it is a waste of ammunition and poor generalship to fire off your "artillery" early in the fight, unless you have a specific purpose in view. The only object you should have in disarming your opponents—partner as well,—of trumps is to make good your long suits. If you have no master cards to make, it is, as a rule, better to keep your batteries masked for the middle or end play, or until the master cards have declared their presence in partner's hand. Familiarity with the best play will convince you that to always lead trumps because you happen to hold five or six, or never to lead them when you hold but two or three, or even one, is not the best whist. With the best players, trumps are used only for distinct purposes. The object in leading trumps must be apparent from the hand or developed by the play. No inflexible rules can be formulated to direct their proper management. The fine points occurring in a hand at whist, cannot be provided for by set

rules, but must be met by the ingenuity and originality of the player.

There is no test of skill so absolute as the aptitude displayed by a player in handling his trumps. The whist player must select the proper moment for a trump lead. A trick too soon or a round too late may ruin a great game. The correct management of trumps is by far the most difficult thing in whist strategy, and few players ever become proficient in this regard.

Five Trumps.

"When you have five trumps, it is always right to lead them." This old rule for trump leading has many exceptions. *Always* and *never* are not safe words to use in formulating whist rules. When used they should be supposed to mean "*nearly always*" and "*rarely ever*." When to lead trumps, as the original lead of the hand holding just five trumps, is at times a difficult problem. It is nearly always right to lead trumps when the trump suit is your only long suit, because if you are weak in all the plain suits it is only fair to presume that your partner is so much the more likely to be strong in them. It is rarely good play to open a suit of less than four cards as the original lead of the hand. Suppose you hold any five trumps, three small in two suits, and two small cards in the third suit—you must, as a rule lead trumps, no matter what they are; any other lead will deceive your partner, and besides, as a rule, you cannot put your trumps to better use. Your chances for making any of your small trumps by ruffing are very slight; you must follow to three rounds in two of the plain suits, and you can hardly expect to find partner short in the same suits that you are short in. Such hands, however, may be classed as exceptional. In the

majority of cases you will have at least a four-card suit apart from the trump suit. It may be laid down as a rule that as the original lead of the hand, the trump suit must be led if it be the only suit in the hand of more than three cards. Occasionally your short suits in such hands may be composed of cards which make it expedient to depart from the above rule; but, apart from this, the rule holds good, and this phase of the question may be dismissed. This leaves open for consideration those problematical hands in which just five trumps are held, and concerning which there is a difference of opinion as to the advisability of a trump lead, as the first lead of all. The writer believes that in many cases there is a better lead than the trump lead for the original lead. Suppose, as original leader, you hold five trumps (hearts); ace and four small, diamonds; two small clubs; and a small spade. You should open your fourth-best d and await developments. Again—you hold five trumps (hearts); ace, k, kn, and small d; two small each in s and c. You open with k d *showing your suit*, then a trump if you deem it best. It is generally best with any five trumps to show your suit first, especially if not longer than five cards. Holding five fair trumps and one good suit, say k, kn, 10 and one small, and small in the other suits, it is generally best to open the plain suit. If partner has strength in the suit he will lead trumps, even if weak in them, provided he has a helping hand in the other suits. If you lead trumps first, from a hand as cited, before you have in a measure established your suit, you are likely to play the opponents' game. An attempt to bring in a long suit with only a moderate proportion of high cards, and holding only five fair trumps, and no re-entry cards in the other suits, fails oftener than it succeeds. It is almost sure to fail if you

lead trumps before effecting, at least in part, the establishment of the long suit, and this is especially true if you do not have cards of re-entry in the other suits.

Bringing in long suits is very pretty work in *theory*, but in cold practice—with two shrewd adversaries on the alert to make *their* long suits—it fails as often as it succeeds. A and B must not forget that C and D have their long suits, and that in every hand there are *three* long suits, only one of which *may* be made. While A B are striving to make their suit, C D are equally as intent at making theirs. The struggle is usually about equal, and the forces meeting, the result is a compromise, each in turn throwing away the long cards. Long suits are made under two conditions: (1) when you have great strength, and (2) when the opponents make them for you owing to their futile attempt to make their own. Rash, speculative trump play, *before* development of suit, commonly results in disaster. When extra risks are run to make *your* suit, you are apt to finish by finding that the opponents have made *theirs*. It is perfectly proper to make every effort within the lines of safety to bring in your long suit, but it must not be forgotten that this object is only *one* feature of many at Long Whist.

It is safe to say that with five moderate trumps, you do *not* lead trumps first of all, unless you have strength in at least two suits, or in one with guards in the others against the possible early establishment of them by the enemy. Rather than "*always* lead trumps from five," simply because you have five, you would better *never* lead from five fair trumps, as the original lead of the hand, for it will nearly always be best to *first show your suit* or lead from it, with the idea of first establishing it, or bring it to such a point that *one* round will clear it up. It is understood that the cards composing your short

suits have very much to do with the question of leading trumps as an original lead. As an illustration, suppose a hand like this—s kn, 10, 8, 4, 2 (trumps); h k, 10, 8, 7, 6; c ace, k; d ace. Here you would unhesitatingly lead the 4 of trumps as the original lead of the hand as your re-entry cards in clubs and diamonds will aid you in your effort to establish the hearts. But suppose in the above hand you have two small clubs and a small diamond, it changes the whole aspect of the hand and weakens it so materially that your chances of making the heart suit are very slim, and your safest play is to open the hand with the 7 of hearts.

Let it always be remembered that the usual denouement of an abortive attempt to bring in your long suit, is that the enemy brings in his! The means you adopt for bringing in your suit are the very tactics your adversary would have adopted. Before you enter upon so forward a game as an attempt to make your suit with only moderate strength in trumps, you should carefully consider the situation; the liability of being forced; the guards you hold in your weak suits, etc., etc. If you do succeed in getting out trumps and are left with the long trump, it will be of little use to you unless you *are in the lead* at the time, and your suit is within *one* round of being cleared up. If your opponents are in the lead, your suit must be established; if the suit is not established, you may be obliged to use your last trump for possession of the lead, and if you have no re-entry card, the opponents make their suit. *The making of a long suit is not the aim of every hand.* In the majority of hands no long suit is brought in, and the victory goes with the correct play and finesse in all the suits. It will not do to attempt to always make your long suit, nor to play with that object in view. Unless you have such strength as to justify

you in playing such a forward game, it is much safer to adopt more defensive tactics. When you come to your first lead after a round or more has been played, you do or do not lead trumps, as the character of your hand and the fall warrant. With great strength in trumps—six or more—you are nearly always in position to have them led when you care to bring them out, and nothing is lost, if you first judiciously reconnoitre the forces of the enemy. While you do not "*invariably*" lead trumps, holding six or more, yet you *nearly always* should, for you are so strong that you are almost certain to be left with at least two long trumps, and you can control the finish.

Four Trumps.

Holding four trumps and three cards each in the plain suits, it is, as a rule, best to lead a trump. If your partner is weak in all the plain suits, you will not make many tricks, in any event. Partner will usually be able to read the situation, and if he wins the first trick he will not return your lead, unless it is best for his hand to have trumps come out. As an original lead you do not lead from four trumps, if you have any other suit of four or more cards, unless you have fair strength in all the plain suits or four very good trumps and a *great* suit, and are in danger of being forced in one of the weak suits.

For instance: ace, k, qu and small (trump); ace, k, qu, kn and two small, and small in the other two suits. You lead the k of trumps and follow with the qu, and if all follow suit you can safely go on with the ace and then with your great suit, and, unless you find five trumps in one hand against you, you will bring in the long suit. Again: Holding any four trumps and commanding cards

in all the plain suits, you may safely lead trumps at once, for no suit can be brought in against you, and the trump lead will protect your master cards from being trumped by the weak trump hand of the enemy. In such cases as this, you do not lead trumps with the idea of exhausting trumps, as much as a protection against ruffing.

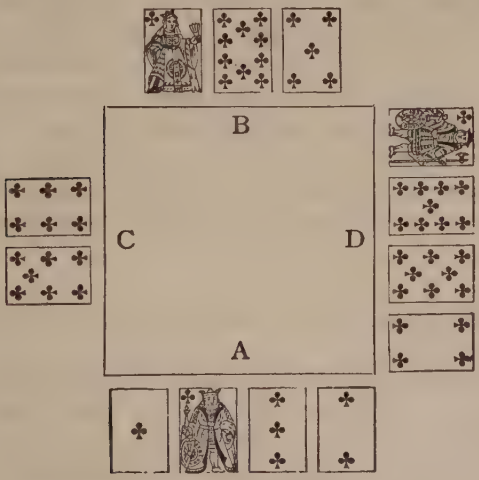
Less than Four Trumps.

In exceptional hands you may lead from three or even two trumps; and when you do, lead the highest. Partner will read you with command in all the suits, and if he wins the trick he will go on even if weak, for he has no fear of the plain suits, knowing that you can look after them, as you would never lead trumps from less than four, unless unusually strong in all the suits. But as a rule, show partner the suit you mean to play for before you lead from less than four trumps. It is in cases like this that you are justified in leading the ace of trumps single; that is the only singleton that is ever led as the original lead of the hand. Your justification for the lead of the ace of trumps single is that you have commanding cards in all the plain suits, and leading the ace and not continuing—partner thus reads the play. You may lead any singleton in trump, especially if it is one that partner will finesse, like the kn, 10, 9, for instance, *after* you have shown him your great suit or suits. To illustrate: You hold—s ace, k, qu, kn; c ace, k, kn, 3; d ace, qu, kn, 8 and 10 of hearts (trump). Open with your king of clubs, then 10 of trumps, and partner will play for your hand, and no harm can come from your singleton lead.

Keep Command of Trumps.

In your management of trumps do not forget that it makes a vast difference *who is in the lead when the last trump is played.* Suppose you have four trumps—ace, k, 4, 3—if you open with the honors, you give up control; but if you open with small, you give partner a chance to win the first round for you with a comparatively small card, say knave or 10. You cannot well lose by such play; you will take but two tricks in the suit if partner has no high card, and it is much better to keep control and have command at the end. You cannot hope to draw all the high cards in two rounds, and then find partner with the long small ones. This would be exceptional, and if you play for the exceptional, you will lose, except in rare cases.

Here is a case in point:—



The 4 turned with D.

1.—A leads k; C plays 6; B plays 5; D plays 4.

2.—A leads ace; C plays 7; B plays 10; D plays 8.

3.—A leads 2; C discards; B plays qu; D plays 9.

A plays as badly here as possible, and even after finding B with the qu, 10, the opponents make a trick in trumps; and, what may be worse than all, A will not be *in the lead* when the last trump is played. D, if he gains the lead, will now draw A's last trump; and if D has a great suit he makes it—*i. e.*, A made it for him. If A, in this instance, was playing for a great suit, his play might cost him—in the event of C D having a great suit—several tricks. On the other hand:—

1.—A leads 2; C plays 6; B plays qu; D plays 4.

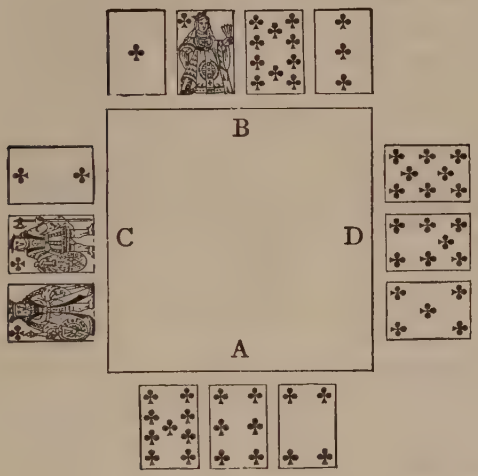
2.—B leads 10; D plays 8; A plays k; C plays 7.

A does not finesse here against the kn. In trumps you are justified in finessing more deeply and more frequently than in plain suits. But A knows that B has the 5, and he reads that D should not have the kn, 9. A now draws the third round of trumps, and then goes on with his great suit, forcing D eventually to play his last trump, and A is left with the thirteenth trump for re-entry. The student who is observant will have noticed that D is made to play badly at trick two, by giving A the option of the finesse. On the return of the 10 by B, D holding the fourchette (and the 8 also) should, of course, cover the 10.

Leading Trumps for Benefit of Great Suits.

It frequently occurs that you lead trumps from two or three, for the protection of one or more great suits developed by the play. Your partner can nearly always divine that your trump lead is the highest of three—possibly the higher of two—and in such cases may be

justified in very deep finesse. You must not jump at the conclusion that he, too, is weak, if he passes your lead or finesses deeply, and on this account discontinue the trump lead, if you get in again. Take this case:

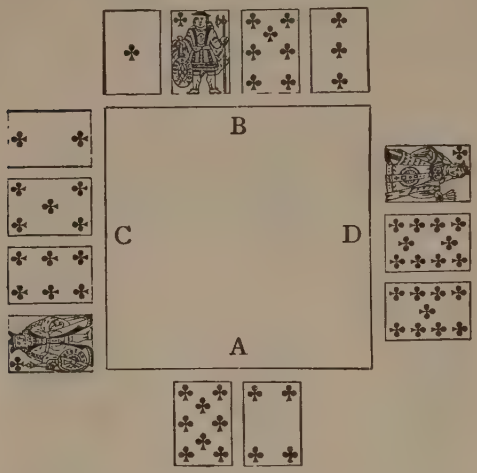


The 10 turned with B.

1.—A leads 9; C plays 2; B plays 3; D plays 5. (C should have played kn.)

B passes the 9 and would not play well if he did not. He knows that A has led his best trump, and although both k, kn are against, the chances are all in favor of passing. As the cards lie, C D cannot take a trick in the

suit. Had C put on kn, B would have played qu and would not have returned the suit. Or again:—



1.—A leads 8; C plays 2; B plays 3; D plays 9.

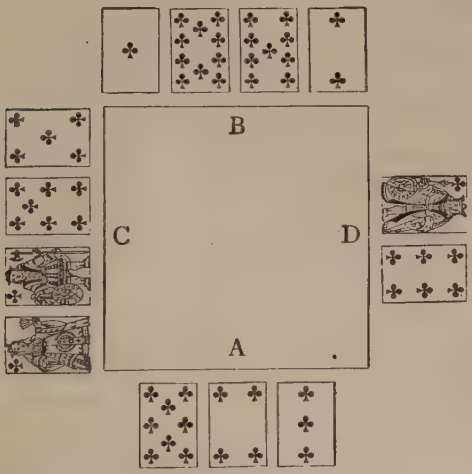
Here the finesse is against four cards, but B would not play well to put up either ace or kn, unless he wishes to force two rounds at once.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 4; C plays 5; B plays 7; D plays 10.

The trumps lie as disadvantageously as possible for B, but there is no help for it; he must keep control of the suit, and at best he could take but one trick if he puts up the ace first round. B reads A's 8 as the better of two, possibly the highest of three, and when A leads the 4, B knows that seven trumps were originally against them, and that four (at least) must be in one hand. If he parts with control the result must be disastrous—nothing could be worse. As:—

1.—A leads 8; C plays 2; B plays ace, D plays 9.

If B continues the lead the wreck is complete, and if he does not, C will, if he gets in, lead through B, and B has not another trick in the suit. C can read that A's lead of the 8 is from the head of two or three. The fall shows that A has not the ace, k or 9, consequently the 8 cannot be a fourth-best. In such situations as the one last illustrated, finesse deeply and keep control as long as possible. If the cards lie fortunately you may gain the single trick that gives you the odd card. This for example:—



1.—A leads 8; C plays 5; B plays 2; D plays k.

Here the finesse is a clear gain of a trick. B reasons that the 8 must force an honor or win the trick, and that if he puts up the ace he can take but the single trick, besides the control of the trumps is at once with the op-

ponents, and nothing could be worse. B makes no attempt to echo here, as in such situations a trick may be lost by the attempt. (*See* Echo.)

Finesse in Trumps.

From the foregoing examples it will be seen that at times finesse in trumps should be deep, and that you do not give up control. When partner leads trumps originally, showing only four, it is often right to finesse against one card, and sometimes you may finesse against two. The state of the score and the character of your hand have much to do with it. If you have a hand that is good to be led up to, it is usually advantageous to finesse, for if your finesse fails you must then be last player to the next trick. If you have fair strength in all the plain suits, and partner's lead shows four only, you may be pretty sure that this is his only four-card suit, and you should finesse deeply if your hand justifies it. To the lead of the deuce or any small card that enables you to read that partner has led trumps from four cards only, you holding any of the following—ace, kn, 10 and small; ace, kn and two small; k, kn and one or more; k, 10, 9 and small; k, 10 and two small; qu, 10, 9 and small, or qu, 10 and two small, it is judicious to sometimes finesse the kn, 10 or 9, as the case may be. If a medium low card is led, say the 5 or 6, you must be more careful how you finesse, for partner may have a great suit and five or more trumps. You can judge of his hand in a great many ways by your own; if you have, for instance, the king of each plain suit, you know that he has no suit established from the start. So much depends upon the character of your hand and the rank of the card led, that it is difficult to give instructions in

finesse without these data. If your partner has first shown his great suit and then leads trumps from probable fair strength in them, there is less room for finesse. Partner may be anxious to have two or three rounds come out at once, especially if your left hand opponent is marked with more of partner's great suit, and your right hand adversary probably short of the suit. In this case, if your finesse fails, your enemy may lead your partner's great suit, and it may be trumped. On the other hand, if it is C that is long, and D void of partner's great suit, the danger just referred to is absent, and you can finesse with more justification. This is especially so if you feel sure of being able to take the next trick led by D, in case your finesse goes to him, as in this event you can then lead him the card you held up as a strengthening card—if you deem it best. Such conditions as these and hundreds of others enter into the matter of finesse in trumps, and either modify it or render finessing out of the question. If partner leads trumps for the evident intent of checking a ruff or see-saw, you do not, as a rule, risk even the major tenace finesse, but put up your best with the idea of forcing two rounds at once.

Be on the Alert to Lead Trumps when the Situation Warrants it.

The best players do not make use of the arbitrary call for trumps except in rare cases (*see* Call), and you must be on the alert to lead trumps when the situation demands it. A trick too soon, or a round too late, may utterly ruin a great game. You may have a hand that does not demand a trump lead, and yet the first card your partner plays or leads may make it imperative that you lead a trump at once. Suppose you hold:—h ace, 5, 4, 3

(trumps); s ace, k, qu, 6; d k, 10, 9; c ace, 9. Partner leads the kn of clubs; you play your ace upon his knave, lead the king of spades to show your suit and then the 3 of trumps. Had your partner led the deuce of c, it would have made a big difference in your game, but the moment you saw partner had a great club suit, you must lead trumps at once. Again:—Suppose your left-hand opponent opens the hand with the ace of plain suit, your partner throws king; with any four trumps you should lead trumps at your first opportunity. Partner playing the king shows that he has only *three* suits *with twelve* cards in his hand; these suits must be numerically strong at least, and one of them is the trump suit. Such a hand demands a trump in nearly every instance. Once more: —B deals and turns the 3 s; D opens the hand with the 3 h; A plays 8; C plays 2; B plays 7. A's hand is—s kn, 10; h ace, qu, 9, 8; c ace, qu; d 10, 9, 8, 7, 3. A should now lead the kn of spades, although he holds but the kn and 10. It may result in a great game, and the distribution of the cards must be very unusual if harm comes from it. D shows but four hearts, probably k or kn at the head, and there is not a trick for him in the suit—most likely. If D's best suit is hearts, and it is presumed that it is, his hand is marked as weak. The fall of the two of h from C proclaims his hand as probably numerically strong in the other suits—it is true—but A will be leading through this hand up to the weak. B will read A's play of the kn and will, of course, pass, knowing that A is playing for the heart suit. If the kn wins A follows with the 10 s, which, if C does not cover, B will also pass. For A to have opened clubs or returned the heart suit would have been out of the question ; A might, it is true, play the more conservative game, and lead the 7 d, but the game is worth the risk of a trump

lead. In such a case as this, when you have the command of a suit, you should generally lead trumps to protect it, even if weak in trumps. Take this case :—A deals and turns 4 s; C opens with the qu d ; B plays kn d; D plays 3 d; A wins with the ace. A holds:—s 10, 9, 4; h ace, qu, 6, 3; c k, 10, 9; d ace, 10, 9. A should lead the 10 of trumps—the situation demands it. If B is not calling, he has but *three* suits in his hand, one of which is the trump suit. If B is weak in trumps then he is unusually strong in hearts and clubs. A's hand and the fall justifies him in giving B long trumps. If, as before stated, B is short in trumps then the opponents must be long, and if A does not lead them C or D will, and while it is possible to arrange the cards so that a trump lead by A will lose, as against the lead of the heart, yet the chances are all in favor of the forward game. Here is another instance demonstrating the propriety of a trump lead, the necessity of which is made evident by a single round:—The 9 d turned by D; A leads qu c, from ace, k, qu, 10, 9 ; s ace, kn, 10, 5, 4, 2 ; d 10, 8, and no hearts—C plays 3 c ; B plays 8 c; D plays kn c. The fall shows A that B has no more clubs or is calling. The inference is that B is long in trumps and hearts. It is highly improbable that B is long in spades—A having six. A has the ace, kn, 10 of spades as re-entry cards, and the situation demands that A should lead the 10 d. B is almost sure to read the play and will pass the 10, if he is not strong enough to take. For further examples illustrating this principle *see* "The Call."

Late Trump Leads.

When partner leads trumps in the middle hand, such a lead usually implies that he sees a fair opportunity to

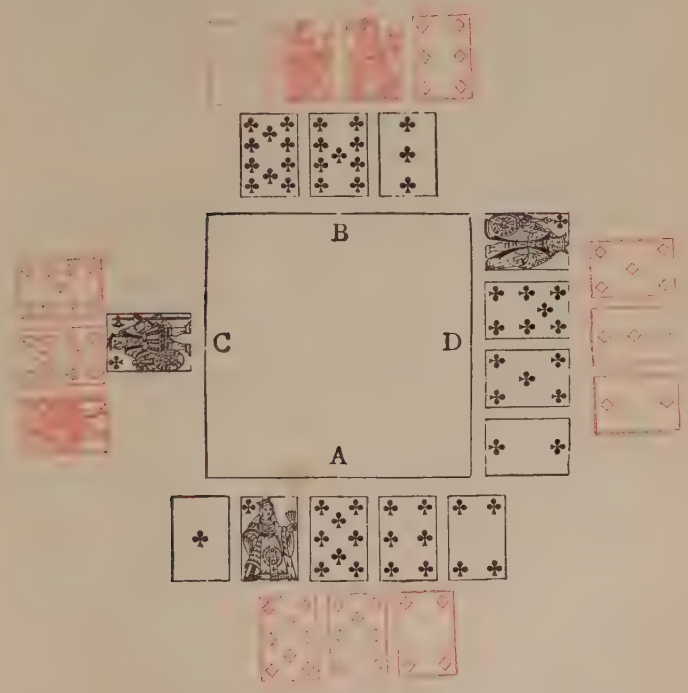
make master cards in his hand or marked in yours, or he hopes to bring in the long cards of the suit. You will generally do better to husband your strength in trumps by fair finesse, for you run great risk of giving up control if the trumps are evenly matched. These late leads of, or signals for, trumps do not carry with them so peremptory a command as those made early in the hand, and you are more at liberty to use your own judgment and discretion. Late in hand partner says to you, by such a lead or ask: "I think best to feel the enemy in the trump suit, as we have some master cards to protect, but husband your strength, if you think best."

You are expected to return partner's early lead of trumps, usually, in preference to every other play. To be sure, you may first show him your great suit. The exceptions to this rule are: (1) When partner has led trumps from four, simply because it was his only four-card suit; (2) when you win the trick cheaply, and it is demonstrable that your right-hand opponent must hold over your partner with a strong tenace, (3) when an honor is up to your right, and you win by deep finesse; (4) when partner has led from evident weakness and finds you weak. There may be other conditions under which you would be justified in not returning your partner's lead of trumps, but these are the chief ones.

Show Partner Your Suit.

If partner calls, and if, at the time you get in, you have not shown partner your suit; do so; also, if partner leads trumps, and you win the first round, you may, before you return his lead, show him your suit. To do this you must, of course, lead a winning card in it, and you must take care that it is not so long that it is likely

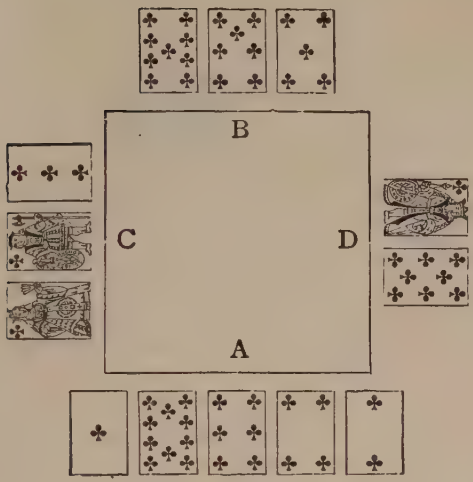
to be trumped the first round, or draw the *only* card partner has of the suit. This last feature—the probability of drawing partner's only card—is to be especially avoided, if you have no re-entry card. The play is often of great benefit to partner. Suppose that the remainder of strength in trumps is with your left hand adversary, partner winning the first round cheaply, he will not return the lead, but will give you your suit, that you may again lead through the opponent. The following is an illustration:—



Knave c turned.

It matters not about the hearts and spades; B is in, and A has called, B first leads the k d, showing ace and two more, and then answers the call with 10 c; A takes with qu; knave falling from C. A knows that B has led the highest card he has, and can have, at most, but two more—thus marking k and at least two more with D. It would be very bad whist for A to go on with clubs—D must be led through, A therefore gives B his suit; B takes with qu, showing ace, and leads the 9 c through D. If D now covers in the hope of making his minor tenace, A takes with ace, and again leads a d which B takes and once more leads through D, and A B make every trick in trumps, although D had k and three others. Had B not shown A his suit A might have selected hearts or spades, as the suit to let B in on, to the loss of several tricks.

It is often shown by the play that *one* of the opponents is left with a trump after the second round, and it is sometimes best not to draw it even if a losing trump, and it is rarely good to lead a third round of trumps to draw it if a master card, as you are drawing two for one. The adverse trump, in this event, must make, and better let it make as the opponent cares to have it make, or lead a card to "force" its play. Examples will render this clear:—

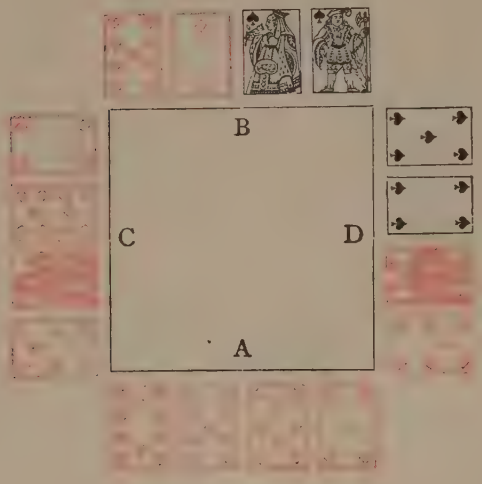


1.—A leads 4; C plays kn; B plays 5; D plays 8.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays k; A plays ace; C plays 3.

The fall shows that C has the qu, B the 7. A should not go on with another round, for the qu must make. If A can lead a card that B can trump, or one that will force C, it is the better play. An exception might be—A with tenaces in the other suits and desirous of placing the

lead with C. Here is a case in which it is best not to draw the trump even though a losing one :—



Hearts trumps.

Trumps were led late in hand for the protection of B's spades. The previous play revealed the fact that C has the 7, B the 9 of trumps; A is in, and if he draws C's losing trump he does not take another trick. A should lead a d, and trust to making the trumps separately. These situations are of frequent occurrence, and care must be taken or loss will follow.

CHAPTER VII.

THE CALL.

SIGNALING is a term usually applied only to a deliberate request for trumps. Whist abounds in signals, and each card that falls, from the first to the last, is to some extent a signal. There is a silent but incessant conversation between players who are familiar with the language of cards.

The simple call for trumps is given by the play of an *unnecessarily* high card and then a lower one. For instance, you play the 4 to ace led, and to the king, the 3; you reverse the usual order of play. It is a recognized convention of the game that you have commanded partner to lead you a trump at the first opportunity. When you do this—when you ask partner to play your game—you should be reasonably certain of making the odd trick at least. The mere fact of holding four, five or even six trumps is not sufficient reason for issuing such an arbitrary command. Your only object in drawing trumps is to enable you to bring in a long suit, or to protect master cards in other suits, and without these features of strength you should not call, even though you may be strong in trumps. Of course, if the fall of the cards or partner's play develops a strong suit in his hand, this changes matters, for you play both hands as one, and you will ask for or lead trumps just as promptly to make your partner's suit as your own.

Fine players rarely make use of this signal in its simplest form. Players with good whist perception will generally see the necessity for a trump lead, without waiting for this common device of the novice.

There are many ways of informing an astute partner that you desire a trump led. If you pass a doubtful card, it indicates you hold four trumps, or three strong ones that you think had best not be broken. If you refuse to be forced by partner, or pass a sure winning card, it is a positive call for trumps. The very best trump signal is made by a single discard. Suppose A, for example, leads the ace, B plays the 4, A follows with the k, B discards an 8 or any high card from the 8 to the ace inclusive (A being the original leader of the hand), B must want trumps led. It can hardly be otherwise, for if B has no card smaller than an 8 to throw away, and having but *three* suits in hand, these are obviously of commanding strength, and also numerically strong, one of these is the trump suit, and a trump led to such a hand must nearly always be advantageous.

The effectiveness of this trump signal lies in the fact that it is made by the play of a single card, and if partner is in at the time, the call is answered at once without giving the opponents an opportunity of taking advantage of the information in any way. If the card so thrown is of a suit already opened, it may then be for a definite purpose other than a call for trumps, and must be considered subject to the previous play of that suit. This single-card call by discard is particularly forcible if made early in the play of the hand. If made late in the hand it is subject to certain modifications made evident by the previous play. It may be laid down as a rule that, when a player discards an 8 or higher card—of a suit not yet in play,—he desires trumps led, and if the

partner cannot trace the object of this discard to some other definite purpose—made evident by the previous play—he should read it as a demand upon him to lead trumps.

The best players do not find it necessary to use the simple call except in rare cases, but they trump signal and read partner's desire for trumps in many ways. The necessity for a lead of trumps is often made evident by the play of a single card—it may be by the very first card partner plays. When partner throws an unusually high card the first round, the situation merits due consideration. Suppose A leads the qu from the ace, k, qu and three others; C plays small; B throws the kn; D small; B can have no more of the suit or calling. If he has no more of the suit his other suits must be strong—numerically at least,—and A should seriously consider a trump lead if he has a fair helping hand. Examine the situation: If B is not calling he then has but *three* suits and *twelve* cards; this means that he has at least *two* suits of *four* or more cards, or he has one of six or more. A fair presumption would be that he has two suits of at least four; or say a suit of five, one of four and a three-card suit; one of these suits is the trump suit; if he has less than three trumps, then he must have two great suits —numerically at least. His hand would be very exceptionally constituted if a strengthening trump led by A did not benefit him. Again: Suppose C opens the hand with k ; B plays 10; D plays small; A, holding ace, kn, 9 and small of the suit, should take the k, and lead trumps if he has even a fair helping hand. The cheapest kind of whist that A could play would be to force B, for he must want trumps led—almost to a certainty. If B is not calling, then he must have numerical strength in the other suits, one of which is the trump suit. A has noth-

ing to fear from C's suit, for at best C can make but two tricks in it. If A has only three trumps, or even two, and leads the highest, B will read that A is playing for his hand, and if B is but moderately strong in trumps he will finesse deeply or pass. In the event of B holding only two or three trumps, he must then have the other suits well in hand, and A must bear in mind that if B, too, is short in trumps that they together *must* have the numerical strength in the other two suits, and if these suits are opened, the opponent who is weak in trumps may trump, and the stronger discard; besides if A and B are both weak in trumps they must then be long in the other plain suits, and their chances of making their short trumps by ruffing are practically *nil*. The lead of trumps by A will protect their plain suits, and if it turns out that B is weak in trumps, little, if any, harm is done, for in this event no play will make many tricks. Suppose, again, that A opens the hand with the kn from k, qu, kn and two or more, and that B plays a high card—say the 10 or 9—D winning with the ace; when A gets in again he should lead trumps, if he has any strength at all in trumps. B's hand demands it. B cannot be unblocking for the 10 or 9 must be his best or second-best card. If A goes on with his commanding suit it may be trumped, and a great game ruined. The point is that if partner throws, in the first few rounds of a hand, a high card that demonstrates that he is either calling or has but three suits left in his hand, you should consider well the propriety of a trump lead at once, if you get in. It matters not whether the card thrown is to your lead or that of an opponent; the play is indicative of strength and usually demands a trump lead. Players who only lead from strength in trumps, and who *always* lead when they are strong in them, are not strong players. The best

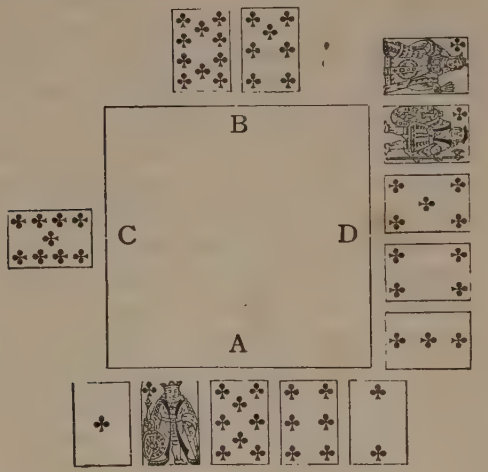
players do not need the trite signal, neither do they wait for it to lead trumps for the benefit of partner's hand.

You should be careful about calling while the opponents are in the lead; they will see your signal as well as partner, and they may play for a ruff, or a cross-ruff, and in every way endeavor to take advantage of the information you have published. If you have a likely chance of getting in yourself, it is often better to not expose your strength until you are in a position to make it effective. It may sometimes happen that you start a signal for trumps to opponent's lead, and, from the fall of the cards, you may be satisfied that it would be dangerous to complete it; in such cases you should abandon it. For example: A leads k; C plays 4; B plays qu; D plays 3. A follows with the ace—C started to call in the first round, holding 6, 5, 4, 2—but it would be very imprudent to complete it, owing to the information C has received from the fall of the cards; A showed four cards only, by the lead of the king; B has no more or calling; this marks three more in D's hand, and if C completes the call, it gives A the option of going on with a small one, to give B the opportunity of making a small trump; if C does not expose his strength, A, if weak in trumps, would not force B.

You may refuse to answer the call, especially if made late in hand, if your right-hand opponent also completes a call at the same time, or by his play shows strength in trumps; as in this event you would be leading up to the calling hand. If, however, it is your left-hand adversary who has also called, you, of course, lead your best trump through him, as the position is in your favor and the reverse of the former.

You may request partner to go on with trumps, even if

the opponents have first called or led them. Suppose this case:—



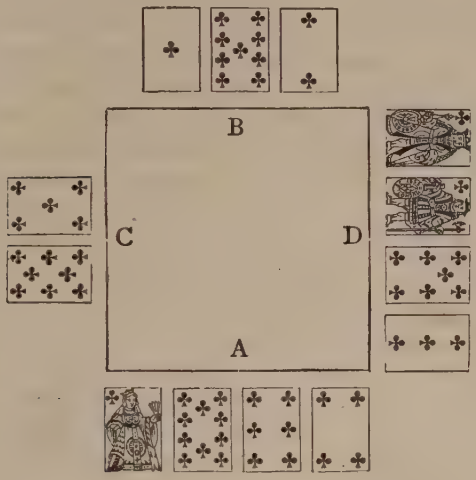
B has the 7 turned.

1.—D leads 4; A plays 2; C plays 9; B plays 10.

It is evident that a trump through D will be advantageous to A, and if B does not take the hint, A may request him to play his last trump. Suppose that B now opens his suit, leading ace then king—A playing the 5 then 4, he requests B to lead a trump through D.

You can likewise ask partner to go on with trumps—he having abandoned his effort to get them out. You may have but three trumps, consequently you do not echo (*see* Echo and Sub-echo); but the fall may develop the fact that it is to your advantage that partner goes on with trumps, you having great strength in the other suits, and you may ask him to persist in trumps. You may also repeat your request for trumps. For example:

You ask for trumps, your partner responds but does not echo. He subsequently sub-echoes that he has one more trump; you want him to lead it if he gets in. Partner may be in doubt as to the advisability of leading his last trump, and you may make sure of it by repeating your request. Take this case:—



B has the ace turned; A called and—

1.—B leads ace; D plays 3; A plays 4; C plays 5.

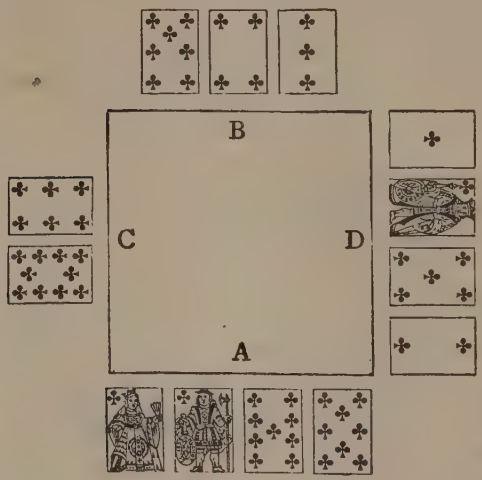
2.—B leads 9; D plays k; A plays 6; C plays 8.

A knows that B has the deuce and that the kn, 7 are probably both with D—they cannot both be with C. Suppose that D now leads k then ace of a plain suit. A playing trey, then deuce, A requests B to give him his last trump if he gets in.

The fall may be such that B may read that the opponents are out, or that the chances are that they have no more trumps, yet A may know that a trump is yet with

the opponents. In such cases A may repeat the request —asking for another round.

There are good reasons why trump-signaling in its simplest form is not as much respected as it formerly was. One objection is that it often interferes with good second and third-hand play. Players are frequently deterred from making the best play from the danger of partner mistaking the play for a call. Holding two cards of a suit second hand, one above and the other below the one led, it is usually the better play to cover; for example: A leads 8; C holds the 9, 6, the 9 is the better card to play, it may win the trick and save a high card for D. Suppose the following:—



A leads 8; C plays 10; B plays 3; D plays 2.

Here the 10 saves the play of king and C D have three tricks in the suit. The only help C can give D in the

suit is lost by not putting up the 10 first round. While this play may at times subject your partner to adverse finessing on the part of the leader, yet in the long run more tricks are lost by not covering than there are gained by the attempt to keep the leader in doubt as to your poverty in the suit. You may be sure, if the leader is a good player, that he will usually finesse on the return, if the situation demands it, no matter how you play your two cards second hand. This is particularly true when your highest card is below the ten, for the play of a 7, 8 or 9 second hand does not expose your poverty in the suit, like the play of qu or kn. The authorities emphasize the fact that the card played must be *unnecessarily* high to constitute a call. There are more tricks lost by second hand not covering in such cases—for fear of partner mistaking the play for a call—than there are made through the use of this signal second hand. At best trump signaling second hand—in the early stages of the hand especially—is not good. More loss usually results from it than gain, and this is particularly true if you signal to a high card that will probably hold the trick and keep the leader in possession of the lead, for you post your adversaries while they have command of the play. Your partner may not have a better chance of getting in than you have, and your opponents will make use of every resource at their command to profit by your acknowledgment of strength in trumps. Beginners, and even players of some experience, are prone to use the trite signal for trumps without proper justification, and invariably call if they happen to hold four or more trumps. Their attention is almost wholly occupied with this one conventionality. In their effort to get this signal off, and at the same time not fail to see the call of partner, they miss the important infer-

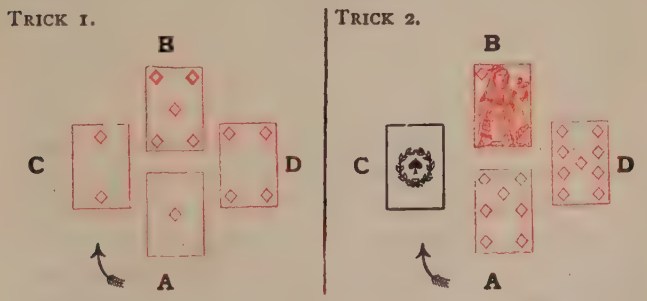
ences that they should be reading. Good players call when necessary, but experience has convinced them that it is best to be very conservative in the matter of calling for trumps. They will lead trumps with a much weaker hand than they will call for them, especially before the hand is developed. If you call for trumps you are responsible for the result, for you command partner to give up his hand to yours, and he is expected to make almost any sacrifice to comply with your order. This being the case you should not issue such an arbitrary command unless you are reasonably sure that your game will succeed.

As before pointed out, care must be taken in reading the play of second and third hand in reference to calling, as second hand may be covering and third hand unblocking. Any player may call for trumps at any stage of the play of the hand; but an early call carries with it more force than one made late in the play. A player may have had the lead, and at the time not consider it expedient to lead trumps, but the subsequent play may determine for him that a trump lead is best. Of course, the fact of his having the lead and not leading trumps should not and does not debar him from afterwards calling. For the same reasons, the original leader of the hand may call, although having the lead he did not lead trumps. For example: A may have the double tenace in trumps—ace, qu, 10 and small—king turned with D; k, kn, 10 and one small; qu and small, and three small in the other suit. A leads the 10—from the k, kn, 10 suit; B wins with ace (C having put up the qu) and then opens his suit, leading k, then ace; A asks for trumps, for now the hand has developed, and while A was not justified in starting off with trumps, he surely has good reasons for asking B to start them.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ECHO.

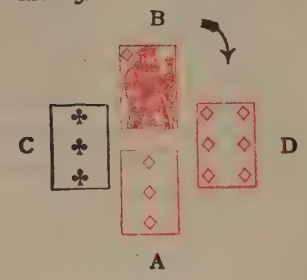
If partner calls, or leads trumps, or by his play shows four or more trumps, you echo with four or more in hand. You do this at your earliest opportunity. The advantages of the echo are evident; if partner can count your trumps, he does not go on with an unnecessary round. The echo is usually a very simple thing, but at times it is not so easily accomplished; it should be made, however, even at some sacrifice of strength; but situations will occur—holding exactly four trumps, three high cards and one small one—where you will lose a trick if you attempt to echo. Of course when it is evident that loss will result from the sacrifice you must make to echo, you will not echo. Here is an illustration of a call and echo —Clubs Trumps.



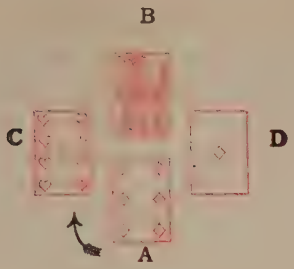
C does not trump the 7 d—trick 2—as it is a doubtful

card, and an even chance that D has the king. C has but four trumps and does not wish to be forced; he throws the ace of spades showing control of the suit; and by the play asks his partner for trumps. Had C thrown any spade, higher than the seven, upon this trick it would have also been an absolute call for trumps. (*See* Call.) Passing a doubtful card is not a call for trumps, but it implies either four trumps or three good ones that had best not be broken, and is a direct intimation to partner to lead them, if he has any assistance. D begins the echo at once, having four trumps, by the play of the 9, holding originally in the d suit 10, 9, 6, 4.

TRICK 3.



B returns the k d, having no good suit of his own, with the idea of forcing the calling hand. D by the play of the 6 d completes the echo; C takes the force willingly now, as he reads four trumps in D's hand, and unless he finds five trumps in one hand against him, he will, with the help of D, bring in the spades. A call and echo may be completed in the play of five cards, as follows:

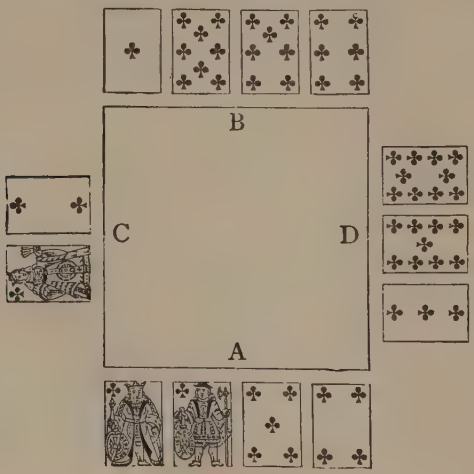


Here C has called by the discard of the 9 h. Now suppose that D at once returns the 2 d, he echoes great strength, for D would never deliberately force his partner —who has called—unless he was so strong that he could absolutely take care of the trump suit.

Echoing by the Manner of Taking the Force.

If partner calls, and a suit is led of which you are void, you can show the number of trumps you have by the way you take the force. For example: You hold the 3, 2 only, you trump with the 2, and lead the three, and you have no more. If you hold the 4, 3, 2, you take the force with the 2, and lead the 4, and you show the 3, or no more. Again: You hold the 5, 4, 3, 2, you trump with the 3, and lead the 2, and you show *exactly two* more. Still again: You hold the 6, 5, 4, 3, 2; you take the force with the 4, and lead the 3, and the play will usually show partner that you held five originally. If you take the force and do not lead trumps you show, of course, that you held but the single trump. So that you can show any number of trumps. The lowest trumps, and in sequence, too, render these examples very plain and simple, as it was intended they should be, but when you hold both high and low trumps under the same conditions the play becomes more intricate. To illustrate:

Partner calls, you are forced, holding ace, 4, 3, 2—you trump with the 3, and lead the ace and, the deuce not falling in the first round, partner gives you the deuce and one more. If with the same holding you take the force with the deuce and lead the ace, partner must give you but one more, or no more. In exceptional cases your three trumps with the ace may be of such rank that you do not deem it safe to sacrifice the penultimate in taking the force, and partner will read your play subject to this possible contingency. When you hold four or more trumps, the highest being ace, and you are forced—partner having called,—you must lead the ace after taking the force. This under certain conditions renders echoing more difficult, or rather partner may not so readily read the play, for the echo may not be made evident until the second round. For instance, you hold ace, 8, 7, 6; partner has called; you are forced; you take the force with the 7 and then lead the ace; the fall may be such that partner is left in doubt. To illustrate :—



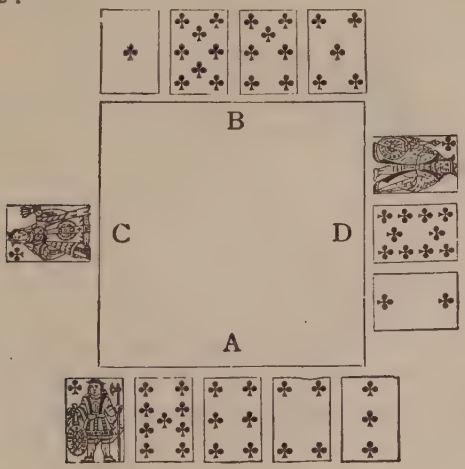
This is the trump suit, A has called, B is forced and trumps with the 7, and B leads ace ; D plays 3 ; A plays 4 ; C plays 2.

There is nothing yet to show A that B has two more, as both the 8 and 6 could be with either C or D.

B leads 6 ; D plays 9 ; A plays k ; C plays qu.

A can now count the hands ; B must have the 8 and D the 10.

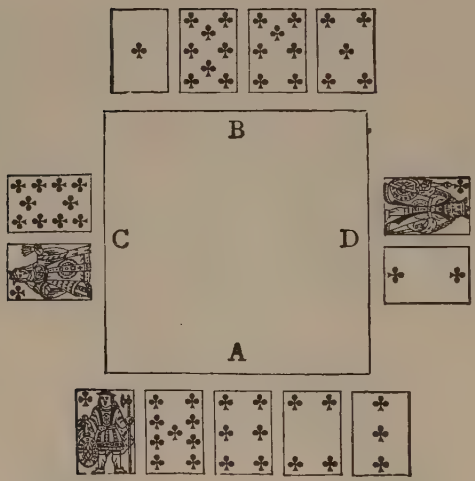
A having asked for trumps, B's play is based upon the assurance that A has strength in trumps. Barring exceptional hands, a call for trumps is not issued, unless supported by four trumps—two honors, or five trumps—one honor. When A has called, and B is forced, holding ace and three small trumps, he should take the force with the penultimate, and lead the ace. The lead of the ace insures two rounds; beside the lead of the lowest will often lose a trick. When B has four trumps, A five trumps, there is a great probability of finding a high card unguarded with the opponents. Take, for example, this case :—



B trumps with the 7, then—

1.—B leads 5 ; D plays 2 ; A plays kn ; C plays qu.

C D must take two tricks in trumps. If B leads the ace, this is not the case. Or this :—

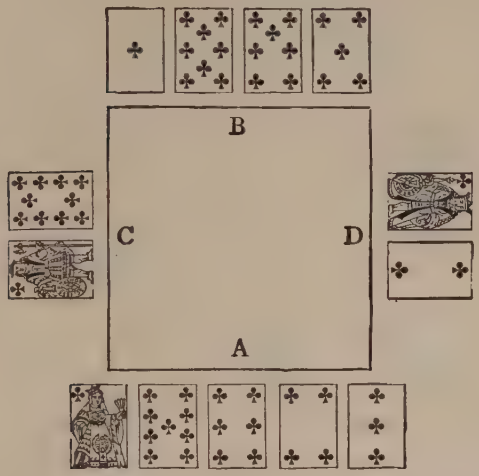


B trumps with the 7, then—

1.—B leads 5 ; D plays 2 ; A plays kn ; C plays qu.

Here D may make his king by ruffing. If B leads the ace and follows with the 5, the k and qu fall together ; and A can read the 8 in B's hand.

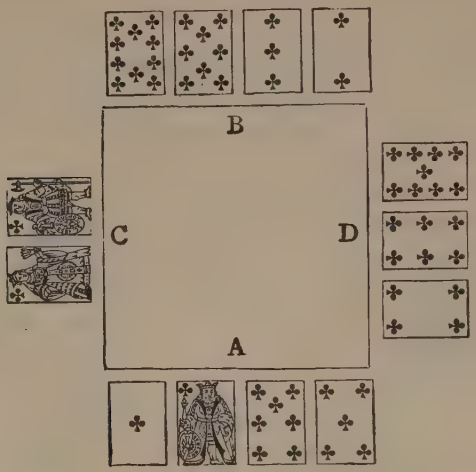
There are a few positions unfavorable to the lead of the ace, after taking the force. Here is one :—



Here, if B leads the ace, the k must, of course, make. If B leads the 5, and D plays the deuce, the k falls to the ace. But analysis clearly demonstrates that B, holding four trumps, the highest being the ace, should lead the ace after a force—in response to A's call.

It is *easy* to demonstrate that the great majority of positions are favorable to the lead of the lowest after taking the force, when the player's four trumps are all smaller than the knave. A card like the 10, 9 or 8 has practically no value as a strengthening card to a player who has called. In most cases the strengthening card will be

sacrificed, or finessed—to the loss of a trick or more—and valuable information withheld. Suppose this case:



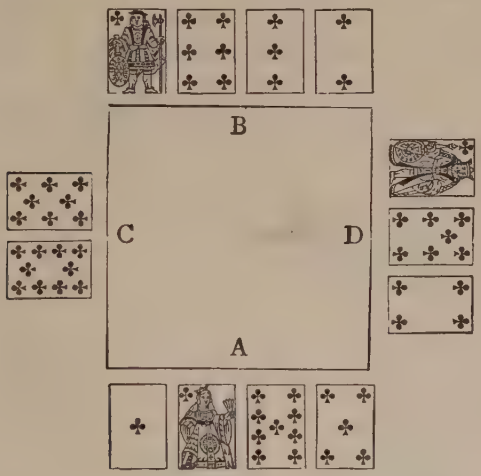
This is the trump suit. A has called; B is forced and trumps with the 3, then—

1.—B leads 10; D plays 4—a trick is lost whether A finesses or plays k. If, on the other hand, B leads 2, A reads at once that B has two trumps remaining, and he will play k; then lead ace, and D's 9 will fall to B's 10. Give A the 4, held by D in the above illustration, then if B takes the force with the 3 and leads the 10, and A finesses it also loses a trick.

There are, of course, positions favorable to the lead of the 10, 9 or 8, as a strengthening card, but they are exceptional.

This leaves open for further consideration the play of B, when he holds four trumps, one or more honors, A having called. The writer has analyzed almost every

possible position, giving the partner of the calling hand just four trumps, the highest not the ace. Positions were found where the lead of the strengthening trump would gain a trick over the lead of the lowest, after taking the force with the penultimate. But in far the greater number of cases the lead of the strengthening card either lost a trick at once, or rendered the position unfavorable to the calling hand. It was found that a trick might be lost in positions apparently the most favorable for the lead of the strengthening card. Take this case:—



A has called; B is forced and trumps with the 3, and—

1.—B leads kn; D plays 4; A plays 5; C plays 8.

2.—B leads 6; D plays 7; A plays qu; C plays 10.

D's k now falls to A's ace, and A B have *five* tricks from their combined trumps. Yet even here A B may have lost a trick by the lead of B's strengthening kn. For example, B trumps as before with the 3, and—

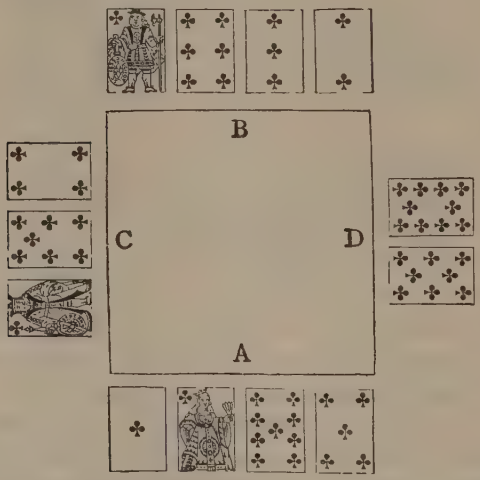
1.—B leads 2; D plays 4; A plays qu; C plays 8.

Now, note how probable it is—in practice—for A to hold a losing card of the suit that B has previously ruffed. In such cases it is A's policy to take the first round in order to force B. B has declared that he has two trumps remaining—one with which to take the force, and the other to give back through the k.

2.—A leads the suit B can ruff; C, being now void of the suit, trumps with the 10; B overtrumps; D follows suit. Mark that had B led the strengthening kn—trick 1—he could not now overtrump.

3.—B leads 6; D plays 7; A plays 9—and D's k falls the next round. A B score six tricks—a gain of one trick over the former play.

Suppose the hands of C and D are exchanged; then we have the following:—



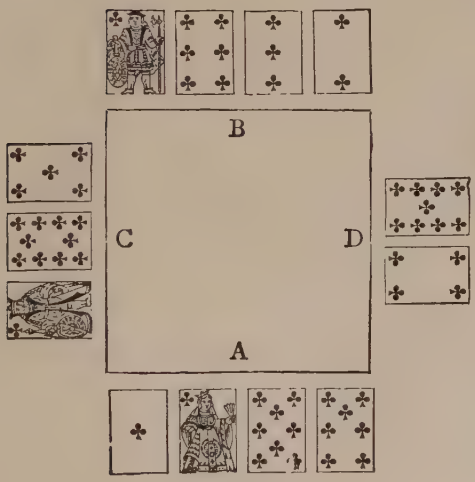
This position is just as probable as the last one illus-

trated. A has called ; B is forced, and trumps with the 3, then:—

1.—B leads kn; D plays 8; A plays 5; C plays k.

2.—C leads a plain suit; B trumps; D overtrumps; A follows suit.

A B have lost a trick by the lead of the kn, possibly more, for C may make a trump by ruffing a suit led by D. Here is another phase of this combination:—



B. as before, trumps with the penultimate, and—

1.—B leads kn; D plays 4; A plays 7; C plays k.

2.—C now leads a card of his established suit; B trumps; D overtrumps; A overtrumps D. A's position is bad. He cannot read the hands. C may have the 10, 8, 2, or there may be a trump in each hand.

In examining the various features of the play under analysis, you must not lose sight of the ever-present advantage resulting from the immediate declaration of four trumps ; and you must consider the disadvantages resulting from the lead of the strengthening card; for it may put you in a position where you cannot overtrump your right-hand adversary. Or, again, it may so weaken your hand that it enables the left-hand opponent to overtrump you.

The importance of at once proclaiming that you have four trumps is very great. You make this announcement of your numerical power immediately after ruffing a suit, and you give notice to partner that he may safely adopt two lines of play: (1) Go on forcing you thus making, under certain contingencies, the best possible use of your remaining trumps. (2) Or he may at once proceed to disarm the opponents, being sure of his power to do so, due to your positive declaration of having originally four trumps.

The student who cares to carefully analyze the various combinations, will find that in a large majority of cases it is immaterial whether the highest or lowest trump is led. That is to say that no trick will be either gained or lost in the direct play of the trumps. But in nearly all such positions the lowest is very much the better lead, due to the information it imparts, and the subsequent gain in tricks resulting therefrom. Many positions will be found where the lead of the highest will at once lose a trick. Others when the lowest will result in loss. The

policy of the play here advised is disputed. But the writer believes it is sound, and that it can be sustained by analysis.

A careful examination of the following tables will assist the student in deciding whether the lowest or highest trump should be led after taking the force—partner having called.

Combinations Unfavorable to the Lead of the Highest.

A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
Ace, k, 6, 5, 3.*	Queen.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	10, 8, 7.
Ace, k, 6, 5, 3.	10, 8, 7.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	Queen.
Ace, k, 6, 5, 3.	Qu, 7.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	10, 8.
Ace, k, 6, 5.	Qu, 7.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	10, 8, 3.
Ace, qu, 6, 5, 3.	10, 8, 7.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	King.
Ace, qu, 6, 5.	9, 7, 3.	Kn, 8, 4, 2.	K, 10.
Ace, kn, 6, 5, 3.	10, 8, 7.	Qu, 9, 4, 2.	King.
Ace, 10, 6, 5, 3.	K, kn, 7.	Qu, 9, 4, 2.	7.
Ace, 8, 6, 5, 3.	K, 10, 7.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	Queen.
Ace, 8, 6, 5, 3.	Qu, 10, 7,	Kn, 9, 4, 2,	King.
King, 9, 6, 5, 3.	Queen.	Kn, 10, 4, 2.	Ace, 8, 7.
King, 8, 6, 5, 3.	Kn, 10, 7.	Qu, 9, 4, 2.	Ace.
King, qu, 6, 5.	10, 8, 7, 3.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	Ace.
Queen, 9, 6, 5, 3.	Kn, 10, 8.	K, 7, 4, 2.	Ace.
Queen, 7, 6, 5, 3.	Ace, 10, 8.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	King.
Knave, 8, 6, 5, 3.	K, 10, 7.	Qu, 9, 4, 2.	Ace.

* A has called; B is forced, and takes the force with the penultimate, and then leads the highest of the three remaining trumps. In each instance the lead of the highest loses a trick, as against the lead of the lowest.

Combinations Favorable to the Lead of the Highest.

A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
Ace, k, 6, 5, 3.*	10.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	Qu, 8, 7.
Ace, qu, 6, 5, 3.	10.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	K, 8, 7.
Ace, kn, 6, 5, 3.	10.	Qu, 9, 4, 2.	K, 8, 7.
Ace, 10, 6, 5, 3.	8.	K, kn, 4, 2.	Qu, 9, 7.
Ace, 10, 6, 5, 3.	9.	Qu, kn, 4, 2.	K, 8, 7.
Ace, 10, 6, 5, 3.	9, 7.	Qu, kn, 4, 2.	K, 8.
Ace, 10, 6, 5, 3.	7.	Qu, 9, 4, 2.	K, kn, 8.
Ace, 9, 6, 5, 3,	8, 7.	Qu, kn, 4, 2.	K, 10.
Knave, 9, 6, 5, 3.	Queen.	K, 7, 4, 2.	Ace, 10, 8.

* Here, in each instance, the lead of the highest trump, after B has accepted the force with the 4, gains a trick as compared with the lead of the lowest.

Combinations Favorable to the Lead of the Lowest.

A'S HAND,	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
Ace, k, 6, 5, 3.*	Any.	Qu, kn, 4. 2.	Any.
Ace, qu, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, 7, 4, 2.	Any.
Ace, qu, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, 10, 4, 2.	Any.
Ace, qu, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, kn, 4, 2.	Any.
Ace, kn, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, 10, 4, 2.	Any.
Ace, 9, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, qu, 4, 2.	Any.
King, qu, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	Kn, 9, 4, 2.	Any.
King, 10, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	Qu, kn, 4, 2.	Any.
Queen, 10, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, kn, 4, 2.	Any.
Queen, 9, 6, 5, 3.	Any.	K, 10, 4, 2.	Any.

* Here the lead of the highest or lowest neither gains nor loses in the direct play of trumps. They all, however, favor the lead of the lowest—due to the immediate announcement of B's numerical power.

In exceptional cases, B may be forced, holding ace, k, qu, and one small, or ace, king, kn and one small, etc. In such cases, B will not attempt to echo by trumping with the penultimate, as he can show his numerical power by the manner in which he leads his high cards that are in sequence. For example:—B holds ace, k, qu, and one small. He trumps with the small card, and leads qu, then ace, and is marked with the k.

This phase of the echo may be summed up as follows:—

When partner calls, and you are forced, you trump with the lowest, holding less than four, and lead the highest. Holding four or more—the ace not the highest—you trump with the third-best and lead the fourth-best. If the ace is in hand you likewise trump with the third-best, but you then lead the ace. The trumps you hold, and the cards that fall to the first round, will determine for you the card to select for the second lead.

If partner calls and you are forced, and the previous play shows that your left-hand opponent may overtrump you, you must then, of course, trump with your highest trump and lead the next highest, if you hold less than four trumps originally ; if with four or more, trump with the highest and lead the lowest.

Echoing When You Get in Without a Force.

If partner calls and you gain possession of the lead without being forced, you answer the call by leading the highest of less than four trumps, the lowest of four—the highest not the ace—and the fourth-best if you have more than four. In response to partner's request for trumps, you—holding ace and any number—lead the ace.

Your play is often modified by the trump turned or the high trump cards you may hold—especially if they are in sequence. It is often best to answer partner's call with a high card, even though you hold four or more. No rules will cover all contingencies. If you hold qu, kn, 10 and one or more small, king up to your left, partner calls, you lead the queen, through the king turned, and if partner has the ace the king is hemmed in. So also if you hold kn, 10 and others, queen or king turned to your left, the knave and not the small card is led.

Echoing in a Plain Suit.

You can echo partner's call by your play in a plain suit as well as in trumps. For example: You lead ace of a plain suit, then fourth-best, taken by D; partner called; D now opens a plain suit; you have four trumps —you begin an echo at once; say D then leads queen and follows with ace, you play the 5 then 4, you have echoed four or more trumps. You may have begun an echo in the first round of trumps; and the trick going to the opponents, you may not have an opportunity of completing it in the trump suit, you must then start an echo in the next suit opened. To illustrate: Partner opens the hand with trumps, and the first trick goes to D, who then opens his suit with ace and follows with king; you had originally four or more trumps; you play to the ace and king—led by D—the 4 and 3, for instance, in the order named, and partner reads the echo.

Echoing to Partner's Lead of Trumps.

If partner leads trumps, you holding less than four—and you do not attempt to take the trick—you play your

lowest card. If you hold more than three, you play the third-best—as with 6, 5, 4, 3 or 6, 5, 4, 3, 2—you play the 4 to the first round in each case. It will often happen that partner can read the echo of strength before the echo is really completed. Suppose that A leads the ace from ace, qu, kn and deuce; C playing 7; B 6; D 5. Now, the 4 and 3 have not fallen, and A at once draws the inference that B is echoing five trumps. Again: Suppose partner asks for trumps, and you get in and lead him a medium low card, say the 7 or 6, the fall of the cards to your lead, in conjunction with the cards he holds, will generally afford him sufficient data to count your hand with accuracy. The inference would be—even unaided by the cards he holds—that you did not have three cards higher than the card led, and that you led the highest of three—or less. On the other hand, if you respond with a very small card, say the 3 or 2, the inference is that you probably have four or more. If you respond with the 2, you must have three more or no more; if with the 3, and the 2 falls, you must likewise have no more or three more, etc.

It will often happen that partner can count your trumps, even if you respond with a card as high as the 7 or 8; suppose you answer the call with the 7; the adversaries drop the 3 and 2, and your partner has the 6, 5, 4; he knows at once that you have no more or three more.

Echoing with High Cards in Sequence.

Holding high trumps in sequence, any one of which will win the trick, you can show the number of trumps by the order in which you play or lead these high cards. There is a difference of opinion even with good players

as to the proper manner of echoing four or more trumps, and owing to this diversity a trick is not infrequently lost. Below will be found, in tabular form, the proper play—holding master cards in sequence—to partner's lead of trumps, as well as the correct card to lead in response to his call.

Echo Table.

(Showing B's play or lead to A's lead of or call for trumps.)

HOLDING	PLAY		LEAD		INFERENCES.
	FIRST	S'C'ND	FIRST	S'C'ND	
Ace, k, qu, only.....	Qu	K	Qu	K	Shows ace and no more (a).
Ace, k, qu, one or more	Ace	Qu	Qu	Ace	Shows k and one or more (b).
Ace, k, only	K	Ace	Ace	K	Not continuing, shows no more (c)
Ace, k, one more.....	K	Ace	Ace	K	Continuing, shows three in suit (d).
Ace, k, two or more...	Ace	K	K	Ace	Shows two at least remaining (e).

(a) The lead of the qu then k, in response to partner's call must show the ace and no more, for if k, qu only were in hand, the k

then qu would have been led, and if ace, k, qu, and one or more were held, queen then ace are led. (*See* following note.)

(b) If A leads trumps, and B plays ace and returns the qu—the qu winning—the k and one small must be with B; for if B holds tierce major only he plays qu then k. If B leads the qu (in response to A's call) and it wins, and follows with ace, the k must be in hand, for if B held the ace, qu (and not the k), with or without others, he leads the ace.

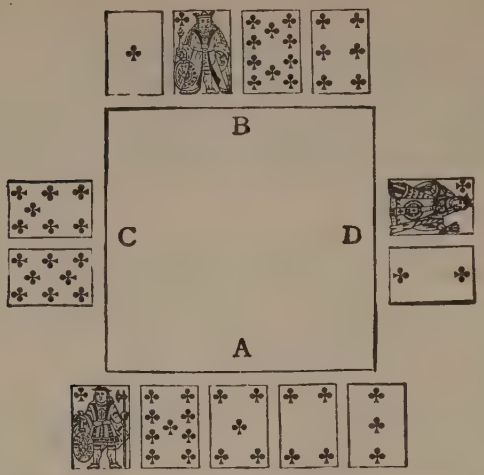
(c) In the event of A holding *six* trumps, and C and D following to the two rounds, B will not continue the lead of trumps, even if he had one more, and this contingency may leave A in doubt, whether B has no more or *one* more. But if B's small trump—in the event of his holding one, and not going on—is smaller than any of the trumps C and D have played, then A can place it with B.

(d) When B follows with his small card he shows A that he held originally but three trumps. As pointed out in a preceding note, B may be able to read that the opponents are void, and in this case will, of course, discontinue the lead of trumps, but in this event A will nearly always read the remaining trump with B, unless B's third trump is a tolerably high card, such as kn, 10 or 9.

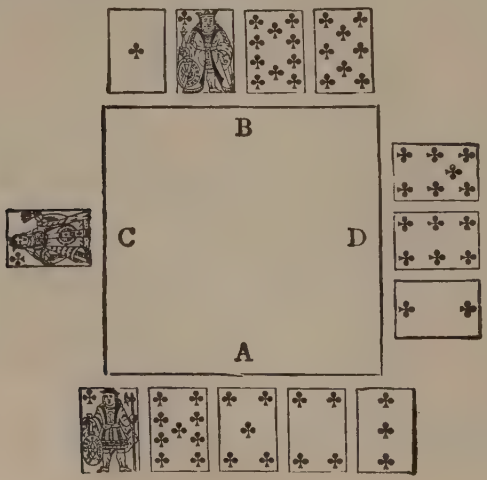
(e) There is no mistaking the play or lead here, as they show at least four originally, whether trumps are continued or not. If the echoing hand goes on with trumps, having held more than four originally, he can generally show it by his third lead.

B, holding k, qu, kn, only; k, qu, kn and one; or k, qu and two small, the ace known to be with A or C, or out of play, can generally manage to echo strength by a similar order of play to that given in the table. For example: A leads trumps (the ace turned with A or C), B holding k, qu and two small, plays the k and returns the qu and shows two or more remaining. Examples showing the advantages of echoing, as given in the foregoing table, follow.

Holding ace, k and two small:—



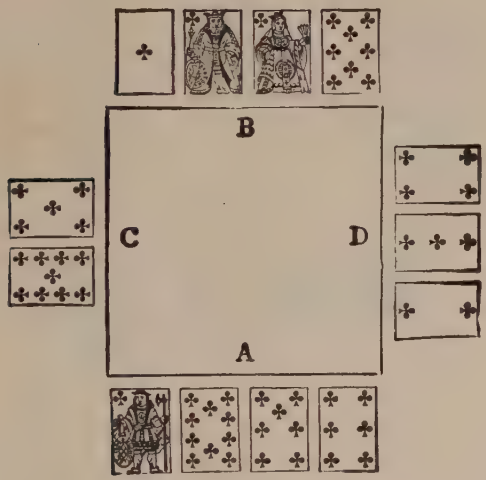
1.—A leads 4; C plays 7; B plays ace; D plays 2.
2.—B leads k; D plays qu; A plays 3; C plays 8.
A gives B the 10, 6. Again:—



1.—A leads 4; C plays qu; B plays k; D plays 2.
2.—B leads ace; D plays 6; A plays 3; C discards.
3.—B leads 10; D plays 7; A plays kn; C discards.

A, here, could not give B the 8, as he played first k then ace showing but three at most. A takes the 10, to draw, as he supposes, the 8 from D. Whether B returns the 10 or 8, A must give D the last trump. But if B plays ace, then k, then 10, A gives him the 8.

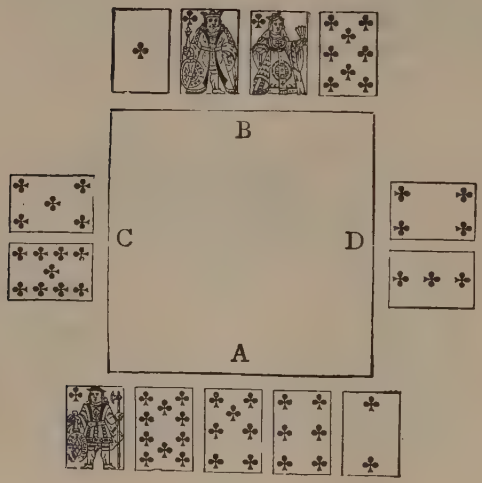
Holding ace, k, qu and one small:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays 5; B plays qu; D plays 2.
2.—B leads k; D plays 3; A plays 7; C plays 9.
3.—B leads ace; D plays 4; A plays 10; C discards.

B, of course, can read the knave with A, but A must

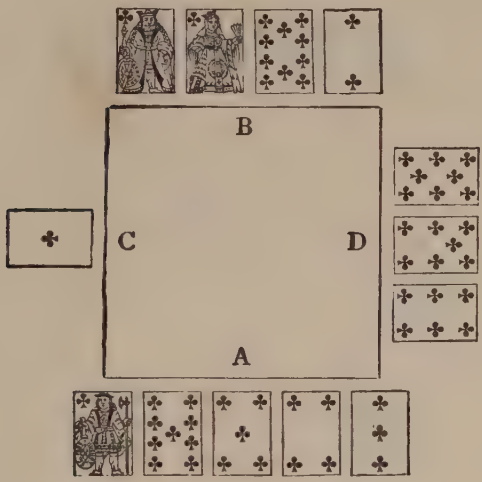
give the 8 to D, as B played his major sequence just as he should, had he not held the 8. Again:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays 5; B plays ace; D plays 3.
2.—B leads qu; D plays 4; A plays 2, C plays 9.
B reads the kn, 10, 7 with A, and the qu winning the second round marks B with the k and 8. It is true that D might possibly have both king, 8—holding up the second round, as B, holding the major tenace *only*, would

play just as he did; but this would be exceptional. All holding up and underplay are, at times, liable to mislead.

Whenever B is left with cards in sequence, any one of which will *win* the trick, he can echo by reversing the usual order of their play. This, for instance:—



1.—A leads 4; C plays ace; B plays 2; D plays 6.

B cannot afford to risk the sacrifice of the 10 in an attempt to echo.

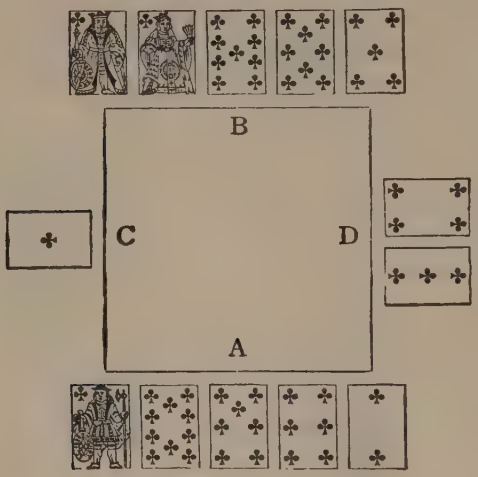
2 (A to lead).—A leads 3; C renounces; B plays k; D plays 7.

3.—B leads qu; D plays 8; A plays 5—and the 10 is marked with B.

If, on the other hand, B plays the qu then k, A must give D the 10.

B may be enabled to echo with the aid of the trump turned.

This, for example—queen turned:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays ace; B plays 9; D plays 3.

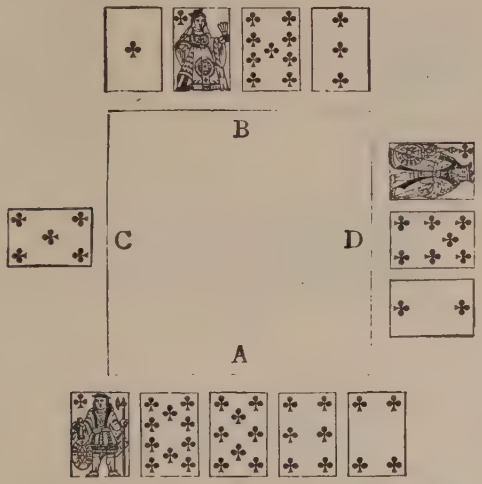
2 (A to lead).—A leads 2; C renounces; B plays k; D plays 4.

B does not continue the suit, as he can read A with the kn, 10, 7, and A is certain B has the qu, 8, 5. Again: B has k, qu, 9, 6, the qu turned. A leads low trump; C plays low; B plays the k, and at once shows four or more. Or, again: B has the 10, 9, 8, 7—the 8 turned; A leads

the ace; B plays the 9, and it is certain that he is echoing four or more.

Echoing, Holding High and Low Cards.

To a low card led by A, B making an effort to take the trick may find it impossible to echo, but usually B can manage his cards so that the fall to the third round, if not to the second, will enable A to read the hands. Here is a case in point:—

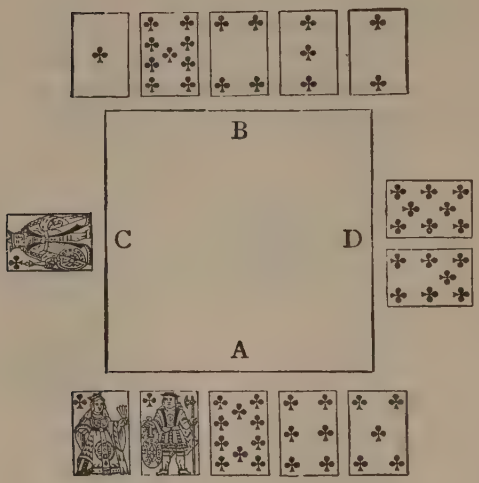


1.—A leads 6; C plays 5; B plays qu; D plays k.

2 (B to lead).—B leads ace; D plays 2; A plays 4; C discards.

A shows five trumps, and B can read a trump with D.

B must now lead the 9, thus showing A that he has the 3. If B leads the 3, A must give the 9 to D. Again:—



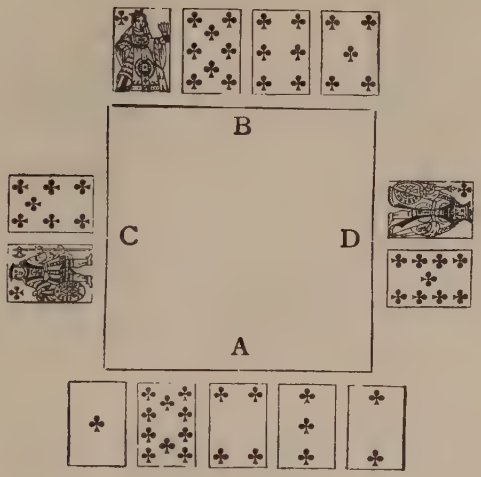
Here is an exceptional distribution of the trump suit, but it is the exceptional hands that require careful handling, and often unconventional treatment. A has called; is forced and trumps with the 6, then:—

1.—A leads qu; C plays k; B plays ace; D plays 7.

2.—B leads 2; D plays 8; A plays 10; C discards.

B has played without due consideration here, and such carelessness may cost a trick or more. B has left A in doubt as to the location of the 9. B can read that D

can have no more, but A can only give B the 4, 3 for sure. A may, in fact must, go on with an unnecessary round, for he must give B the credit of playing correctly. Again:—

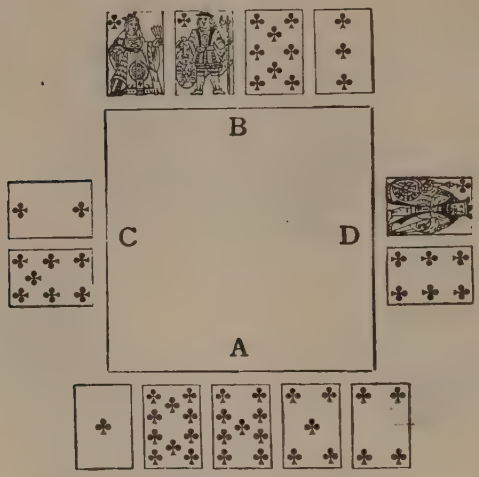


1.—A leads 3; C plays kn; B plays qu; D plays k.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 5; D plays 9; A plays 10; C plays 7.

A gives B the 8, 6, but to read this A must note carefully the fall; he marks that D cannot have the 8 or the 6, having played the 9; C can have no more, for with

three originally, he would not have played the kn first round. Suppose, however, the trumps lay as under:—



1.—A leads 5; C plays 2: B plays kn; D plays k.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 3; D plays 6; A plays ace; C plays 7.

B can read A's hand, but A cannot place the qu, 8, he only knows for sure that B has either no more or both of these cards. D may have the 8, or C may have both qu and 8. If, however, the 8 and 6 change places, everything is clear to A, and this demonstrates the importance of noting precisely the cards that fall, and from whom. A single pip may make a great difference. Give B the 6, D the 8, and then—

1.—A leads 5; C plays 2; B plays kn; D plays k.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 3; D plays 8; A plays ace; C plays 7.

B must now have the 6 as C and D each threw higher cards to the second trick, and B having the 6 must also have the qu, for with 6, 3 only, he would have led the 6 not the 3. Once more: Take the same illustration as last diagramed:—

1.—A leads 5: C plays 2; B plays kn; D plays k.

2 (A to lead).—A leads ace; C plays 7; B plays 8; D plays 6.

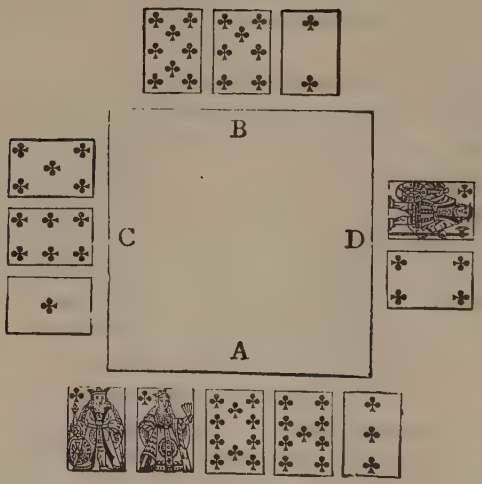
A leading at trick two, B does not have to make an effort to take the trick, and throwing the 8, marks the 3 in his hand and consequently the qu also. B, attempting to take the trick the first round, could not echo, but A leading the ace gave him the opportunity to do so.

These examples illustrate the fact that usually B can so handle his cards that A may read his trumps, and it is seldom an unnecessary round of trumps need be played. On account of the negative inference partner will draw, you should be on the alert to echo at the earliest moment. For instance, you lead the 3, from the k, qu, 4, 3; second hand plays ace; partner plays 5; fourth hand the 2; you know that partner has not started an echo, and consequently has at most two more, C no more, D at least four more; you do not persist in trumps, and if it turns out that partner had four trumps and did not echo—a great game may have been lost.

The Sub-Echo.

When partner calls, or leads trumps from *strength*, you sub-echo if you hold exactly three trumps. The

opportunity to sub-echo may develop in various ways. Take this case:—



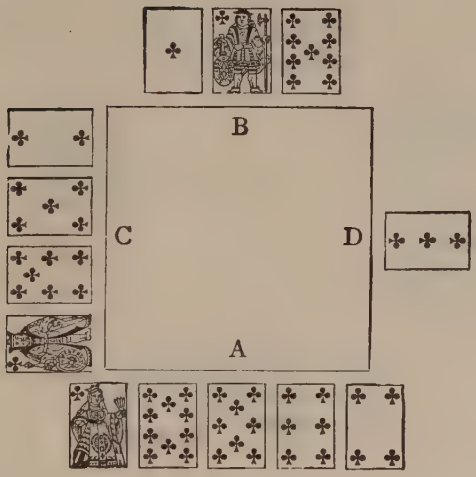
This is the trump suit.

1.—A leads qu; C plays ace; B plays 2; D plays 4.

B, by the play of the 2, shows that he is not echoing, hence has less than four trumps (*see* The Echo). Now, suppose that C opens a suit with ace, then k, B plays the

3, then the 2, he sub-echoes, and proclaims the original possession of three trumps.

Or this:—



This is the trump suit.

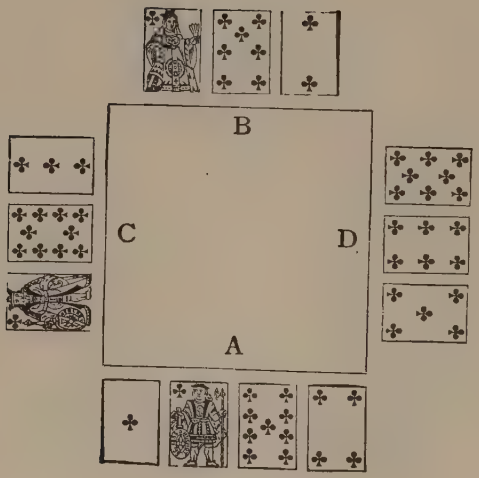
1.—A leads 6; C plays 2; B plays ace; D plays 3.

2.—B leads kn; D renounces; A plays 4; C plays k.

B shows, by the return of the kn, that he did not hold

four trumps originally. B may now echo in the usual way in the next suit led adversely.

Take this case:—



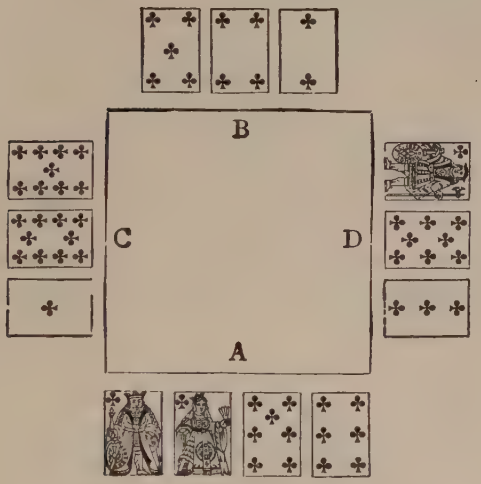
This is the trump suit. A has called; B gains the lead, and—

2.—B leads qu; D plays 5; A plays 4; C plays k.

B shows, by the lead of the qu, that he has less than four trumps.

Here, as in the preceding examples, B may sub-echo, by echoing in a plain suit led adversely.

Again:—



This is the trump suit. A has asked for trumps; B is forced, and takes the force with the deuce, and therefore has not four trumps, then—

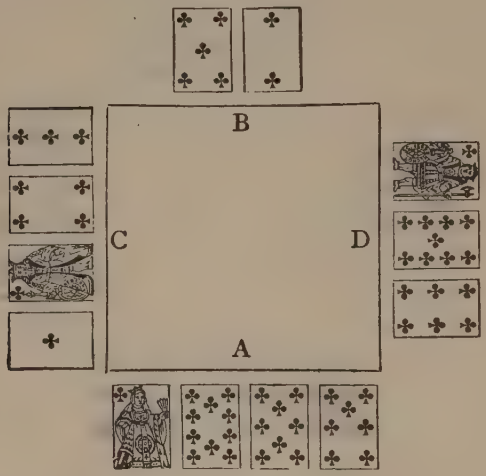
1.—B leads 5; D plays 3; A plays qu; C plays ace.

Suppose, for example, that C now leads k, then ace of a plain suit, and B plays the 7, then 4, he sub-echoes, and A reads that B has the 4 of trumps remaining.

Valuable negative inferences may be drawn from the

play. Suppose in the last example illustrated, B holds the 5, 2 only, the 4 being with C. B will, as before, take the force with the two and lead the five, and not sub-echoing in the suit led by C, although showing by his play that he had the opportunity to do so; A is enabled to read at once that B has not the 4, and that four trumps at least are in one hand against him.

Once more:—



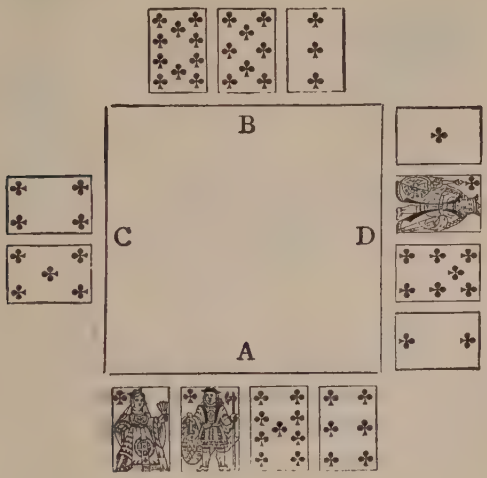
This is a plain suit. A has called in a suit previously led; C is in the lead, and—

1.—C leads k; B plays 2; D plays 6; A plays 7.

2.—C leads ace; B plays 5; D plays 9; A plays 8.

B has not echoed A's call, consequently has not four trumps. If another suit is now opened, B may echo in the usual way, and by the play show exactly three trumps; or if A gets in and leads trumps, B may sub-echo the holding of three trumps by the same order of play as he would adopt to echo four or more.

The student will understand that when A calls or leads trumps, B is supposed to echo—if he holds four trumps—at the *first* opportunity, and sub-echo—if he holds three trumps—*after* he has had an opportunity to echo and did not. When B does not echo on the first opportunity, or shows by the rank of the card led, played, or returned, that he holds less than four trumps, as illustrated in the foregoing examples, he then echoes in the usual way and shows by the play exactly three trumps. B, however, on the first or second rounds of the trump suit, may not be able to show that he has less than four trumps. He may be forced to attempt to take the first round of trumps or the relative value of the card he leads, plays, returns, or with which he takes a force, may be such that it conveys no intimation of his numerical power in trumps. Under such circumstances B may exhibit his original holding of exactly three trumps in the following manner:—

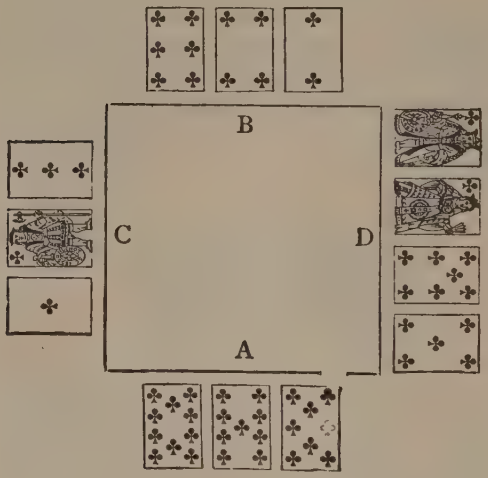


This is the trump suit.

1.—A leads 6; C plays 4; B plays 10; D plays k.

2.—(A to lead).—A leads 9; C plays 5; B plays 3; D plays ace.

B has not been able to give any information to A in regard to his numerical power in trumps. A can only read that unless D has the 2, B is echoing, and has two trumps remaining. But if the 2 is with D, B may have no more. B may now exhibit his original holding of exactly three trumps. Suppose that D now opens a suit distributed as follows:—



1.—D leads k; A plays 8; C plays 3; B plays 4.

2.—D leads 5; A plays 9; C plays ace; B plays 6.

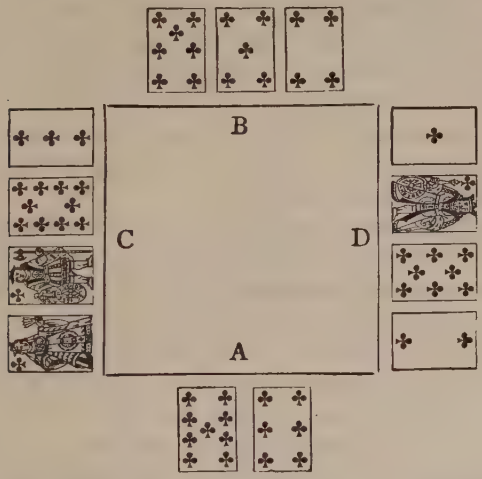
Note that B is not echoing *four* trumps. Note, also, that A can read that B must have the deuce, and is sub-echoing *three* trumps.

3.—C leads kn; B plays 2; D plays 7; A plays 10—and B has sub-echoed.

The opportunity to sub-echo presents itself in a great variety of ways, but the phases here illustrated occur more frequently than any others.

Anticipating Call, Refusing to Echo, etc.

You may sometimes anticipate a call from partner, owing to the high card he has played, and prepare to echo, but you must be in a position not to complete it in case partner is not calling. Take this case:—



1.—D leads k (plain suit); A plays 9; C plays 3; B plays 5.

B suspects that A might be calling, and, having four trumps, he plays the 5.

2.—D leads ace; A plays 6; C plays 10; B plays 4.

B has really called, as A may not suspect the echo, but had A not called, B would have played the 7.

If partner leads a high trump in the middle or end play, or at any time when it is probable that he is not leading from strength in trumps, but to protect a great suit developed by the play, you should not echo if at any sacrifice of strength. For example:—

Partner leads the ace from ace and two small, you holding k, kn, 10, 2.

If you play the 10 you lose a trick, even though you catch the qu, if you find 9 and three others in one hand against you.

You can show great strength in trumps, partner having called, by refusing to answer the call, forcing him instead. The responsibility of the game rests upon you if you thus deliberately refuse to comply with his request. Such play on your part is equivalent to saying: "Partner, I have great strength in trumps, and deem it best to first force you, as we will have strength enough left to draw the opponents' trumps."

If partner passes a doubtful card or refuses to be forced, he proclaims strength in trumps, and if you hold four or more trumps you should begin to echo at once. Suppose D opens the hand with ace and follows with the 6; A, to the 6, throws a small card of another suit, he has not asked B to lead trumps, but he has notified him that he has moderate strength in trumps, not sufficient to call, perhaps, but he shows either four fair trumps or three good ones that he does not care to break—especially upon a doubtful card. Now, suppose the 6 is won by C, who then opens his own suit, B should begin an echo at once. A will not read that B is calling, he will know that B is echoing four or more trumps to his (A's) negative announcement of strength. A, here, should be

on the alert, and if B drops a suspiciously high card, he should anticipate B's echo, and if forced again by D, he should take the force, and lead trumps.

The instructions to the student in the foregoing pages, in the management of trumps, are addressed principally to *B* and are based upon the fact that *A* has either called for trumps or by his play shown strength in them. If A calls or shows strength in trumps—four or more—B's management of his trumps—*i. e.*, the manner in which he takes a force, leads trumps, etc., is modified by the fact that B knows that A has strength in them.

The card to lead, when a trump is led as the first lead of all, is the same as in a plain suit, except in a few instances, which are pointed out in the Analysis of Leads. The trump card turned may also affect the lead of trumps. (*See* page 74.)

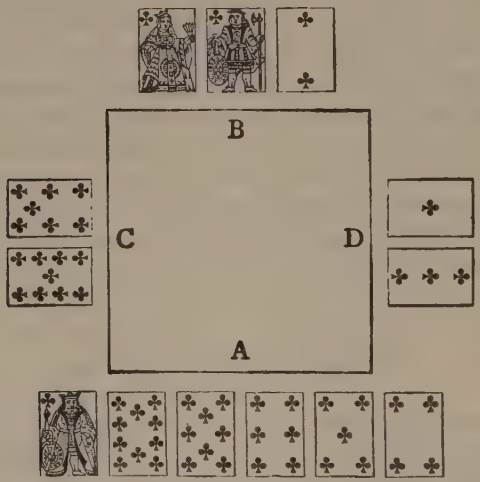
Trumps Led After a Force.

When you are forced and then lead trumps of your own volition, you trump with your lowest trump and and lead the highest—holding less than four. For instance: A is forced, holding kn, 10, 6; he trumps with the 6, and leads the kn.

Holding four trumps,—say ace, qu, 4, 3, he trumps with the 3, and leads the 4.

When a player is forced, holding more than four trumps he takes the force with the fourth-best trump, and if he then leads a low trump, he leads his original fifth-best card. For example: A holds kn, 10, 6, 5, 4; kn, 10, 6, 5, 4, 3, or kn, 10, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2—in each instance he takes the force with the 5, the original fourth-best, and then leads the 4, the then fourth-best card. By

this order of play A shows B three cards, yet in hand, higher than the card led, irrespective of the card he trumped in with. Five trumps are shown immediately, by the force and lead; and with six or more, the fall to the first or second round will nearly always enable B to read A's exact numerical strength. Suppose:—



A takes the force with the 6. Then—

1.—A leads 5; C plays 7; B plays kn; D plays ace.

2 (B to lead).—B leads qu; D plays 3; A plays 4; C plays 9.

A reads, as soon as D plays the 3 to the second round, that B has the deuce, and as B can read three higher cards than the 6 yet in A's hand, he does not go on with trumps. A might be deceived by D playing false (holding the deuce), but the best whist players do not play false cards. It is cheap strategy—or rather no strategy at all—and there is nothing to be gained by it in the

long run (*see* False Cards). Suppose, upon the other hand, A takes the force with the 4, and leads the 5, or even the fourth-best, the 6, then B cannot read A's hand.

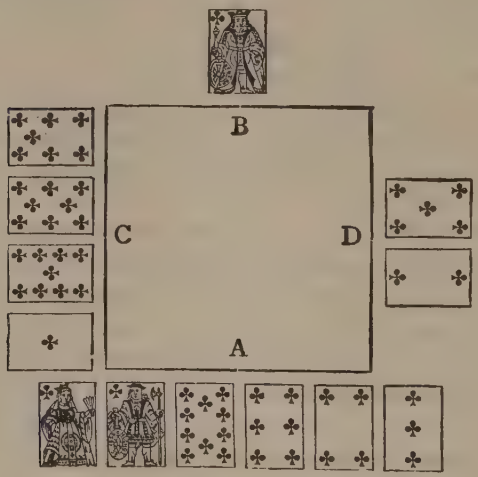
B must not forget that A may have been compelled to take the force with his lowest trump, even though he holds five or six trumps, owing to the fact that he might lose a trick by the sacrifice he must make to trump with his fourth-best. Take for example:—Qu, kn, 9, 8, 3. You should trump with the 3, and lead the 8. If you trump with the 8 and lead the 3, you might find the 10 and two small with C, and the ace, k, 7 with D, to the immediate loss of a trick. Such chances of incurring loss, however slim, a careful player will not take. It follows that B must always read A's play, subject to the possibility that A may have taken the force with his lowest trump, holding five or six, owing to the character of the trumps in hand. Holding five or six trumps, you can, however, usually show them at once; but if to trump with the fourth-best is too great a sacrifice, then trump with the fifth-best and lead the fourth-best, and when the small trump comes out later on, or its absence from the fall marks it with leader, the original holding of six is declared.

If partner takes a force, and then leads trumps of his own accord, an inference is that he has five or more trumps, even if the manner in which he takes the force and leads does not proclaim it unless, however, he is evidently playing for the protection of great suits in his hand or marked with partner.

Leading a High Trump After a Force.

If you take a force, holding such trumps that you must then lead a high card, you lead, and follow in

accordance with the rules for leading with the number you hold *after* taking the force. To illustrate: You hold ace, k, qu, 5, 4; you are forced, trump with the 5, and then lead the k—not the qu. Again: With ace, qu, kn, 4, 3 you trump with the 4, and lead ace then qu. But with ace, qu, kn, 4, 3, 2, you take the force with the 4, and lead ace, then kn, showing that you held originally six trumps. Holding more than four trumps—intending to lead a high card after taking the force—you will take the force with your lowest trump, if to trump with your fourth-best is any sacrifice of strength. If your small cards are in sequence, as in the foregoing examples, you run no risk by trumping with the fourth-best, but loss *may* result through the sacrifice of a single pip in rank, as the following case illustrates:—



A is forced and trumps with the 6—the fourth-best. Then:—

1.—A leads qu; C plays ace; B plays k; D plays 2.

C now leads a card of a suit of which both D and A are void. D trumps with the 5, and A must now overtrump with the 10—or yield the trick—thus making C's 9 and 8 both good, and a trick is lost. The chances of losing a trick by trumping with the 6—with this holding—are very slim, but a careful player will not take even this chance, as there is, in fact, no necessity for it. If A trumps with the 4, and then leads qu, subsequently following with 10, the six trumps are proclaimed.

CHAPTER IX.

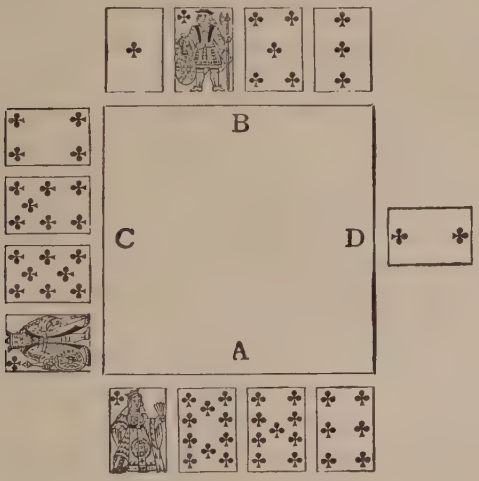
THE TRUMP CARD.

THE rank of the card turned may affect your play, especially if it is a high card. If the trump card is turned to your right, and an honor—say k, qu or kn—do not let this fact alone deter you from leading up to it, if your hand demands a trump lead. Many players carry the refusal to do this to excess. If you have a tenace over the card turned—say ace, qu, the k turned—it is, of course, an advantage to have the trump come up to you, through the honor turned, particularly a high card like the kn or 10. In such cases, if you think you can get word over to partner in time, you may not lead trumps as you otherwise would, if the card turned was a small one. This is, however, critical work, and very often results in more loss than gain.

There is no time that you should watch the play of partner so closely as when an honor is up to your left. If partner does not open with trumps, you must not take it for granted that he does not desire trumps led. He may be waiting to get word across to you, that you may lead the best card you hold, through the card turned. Suppose the king is turned to your left, your partner opens with a high card, indicating strength, and then changes the suit—leading fourth-best, if you win the trick, carefully consider the advisability of leading a trump through the k turned, as this may be partner's desire. It follows that if you suspect this, you should

not finesse, but play your best card that you may get in to comply with his desire.

If you lead up to a high card turned, you may lead a card higher than the one that is up, as with k, kn, 10, and others, qu turned, you lead king and not kn; k, kn, 9, and others, 10 turned, you lead kn, etc. If the card is turned to your left, it does not so much affect your play; you can generally lead the conventional card, and partner will finesse or not, as he thinks best, aided by the fact that he knows the rank of the card turned to his right. If you lead through a high card turned, and partner wins the trick cheaply, and does not return it, do not take it for granted that he has no more. He may be waiting to have you again lead through the honor turned, having finessed the first round. In such cases, it is incumbent upon you to follow up the advantage gained by B's successful finesse, by leading through the honor again. Take the following case:—



This is the trump suit; C has the k turned. B opens the hand—you win, and holding a good hand, lead trumps. But you *first* show B your own good suit, leading say k from ace, k, qu, and one small. This is a point that should not be forgotten. In such cases, if practicable, show partner your suit before you lead trumps. He will then know what suit to lead to give you the lead. You must take care that your suit is not so strong numerically that it is likely to be trumped the first round. Now suppose:—

1.—A leads 6; C plays 4; B plays kn; D plays 2.

B finesses knave here, for if the king and queen are both against, one at least must make. B would play very poor whist to return the ace, and thus free the king. A having shown B his suit, B leads it, A takes and—

2.—A leads qu; if C does not cover, B passes; and if C puts up the king, B wins with ace, and there is not a trick in trumps for C, although he holds king and three others. If B had been playing careless whist, and, forgetting that C had the king turned, played the ace the first round, or returned it after the successful finesse, C must have made his king; besides giving C the probable chance of making one or both of his small trumps by ruffing.

The trump card should never be forgotten, no matter how small, for until it is played you know the position of this trump, and this information is sometimes worth several tricks. Suppose the 5 is turned by partner. You call, holding k, qu, and three small. Partner answers by leading the ace, and follows with the deuce. You know, if the opponents follow suit in these two rounds, that they can have no more trumps, even though you do not recollect a card that has fallen. Partner must have the 5 and *one* more, because holding ace, 5, 2, only, he would

have led the ace, then 5, but knowing that he had the 5 turned you read that he has the 5 and one more. Had you failed to note the card turned, you might be totally in the dark as to where the other two cards of the suit lay. Remembering the card turned may be of value to you in various ways. Take this simple case: Partner turns the 6, the opponents lead trumps, you take the second round. In these two rounds your partner played the 3 and 4. You now open your suit with ace; partner is void; you follow with a small one knowing he will ruff with the 6—the card turned.

There is a great deal of clever strategy based upon the knowledge of the card turned, and many a brilliant play is made possible by it, and it follows that it should not be missed. Make it a rule to impress upon your mind the rank of the card turned, before a card is played, and while it is lying upon the table. This should be the first tax upon your memory.

CHAPTER X.

OVERTRUMPING.

THE ordinary whist player is too prone to jump at every trick that he can take, simply because he can take it, never pausing to consider if he may not have a better thing to do. Such players play the hand as if they expected to take the thirteen tricks. No trick should be taken until you have looked the field over carefully. It will, it is true, mostly turn out that you decide to take the trick, but occasionally you will see your way clear to refuse to take. This means that you have simply deferred your privilege for a round or two, and by the play enabled yourself to take from the opponent an extra trick—by way of interest.

Only the experienced whist player has the strength to resist the temptation to overtrump; the novice invariably takes the bait, and by doing so may ruin a great game. The veteran calmly examines the situation in all its phases, and often to his advantage. He reasons that if he overtrumps he must lead something, and whether he can lead to advantage is a matter of concern. He knows that if he is only moderately strong, that by weakening his trump suit, his remaining trumps may then be drawn. He will first carefully note if he has a card which may be thrown away to advantage. His own hand only will not be considered, but that of his partner as well; for if he does not overtrump, his partner will then be last player to the next trick—a "coigne of vantage." The adversary

who has trumped may be forced to lead up to a tenace, and the trick at once recovered and a trump saved for service later on. It is very often best to refuse to overtrump your adversary early in the hand when you have just four trumps and a strong hand besides. You are very much in the same position as though forced by adversary; if you overtrump, your hand is very much weakened, and you have then abated your chances of getting out the trumps. By injudicious overtrumping in such situations you may utterly ruin a great hand. If you do not overtrump, partner will read your position, and if he gets in he will lead you a trump, for your play demands a trump from partner.

You must never lose sight of the fact that opposite you sits a *partner*, who, like you, should be on the alert. The trick you refuse to take places the lead, and this may make a clear trick for partner, and you are left with your trumps intact. Besides you will be in so much better position to claim the subsequent trick in lieu of the one you passed. As a rule, you do not pass the opportunity to take a trick by overtrumping, or otherwise, if you clearly relinquish your power to afterwards take a trick in its stead—and the advantage in position to boot. Your refusal to overtrump is in the nature of a finesse or underplay for position, to enable you to take a trick that you otherwise would lose.

As a rule, you gladly embrace the opportunity to overtrump if you are weak and the adversaries are strong, or if you are strong enough to overtrump and still lead trumps. In whist, as in chess, the end from the opening must be in view. You must look ahead. Early in the struggle a plan must be formed by a train of careful reasoning, and the final success prepared for. Preparatory arrangements must be made. Players who play for

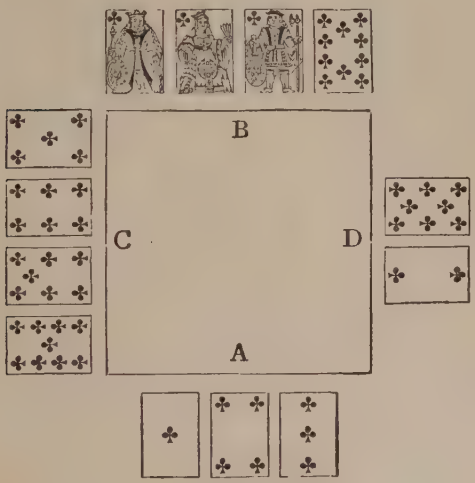
the instant trick have small use for the markers—their opponents usually do the scoring.

Enough has been said under this head to put the young player upon his guard about overtrumping without first carefully analyzing the situation. For illustrations *see* "Critical Endings."

CHAPTER XI.

BLOCKING PARTNER IN THE TRUMP SUIT.

WHILE there is no possibility of blocking partner's trump suit, as you do his plain suit—*i. e.*, prevent him from making the long cards in it, you may, however, block him in his endeavor to draw the opponents' trumps. This may be very disastrous; take the following simple case:—

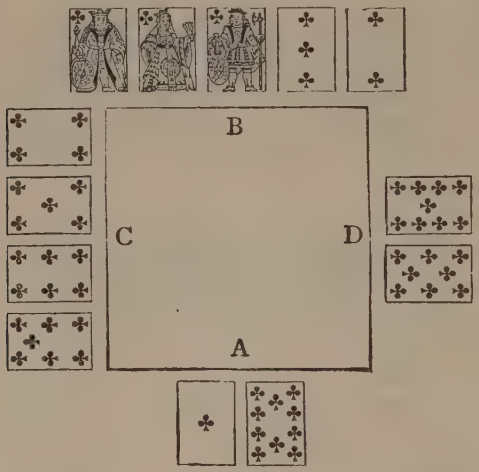


C turned the 9.

1.—B leads k; D plays 2; A plays 3; C plays 5.

2.—B leads 10; D plays 8; A plays 4; C plays 6.

B showed that he led from the sequence of 10 to k exactly, and while A knows that the 10 led by B will win, he must not thoughtlessly play the 4. A, here, blocks his partner, for when B goes on with the qu, A must take, leaving C with the 9; and C may make the 9 before B gets in again to draw it. Again:—



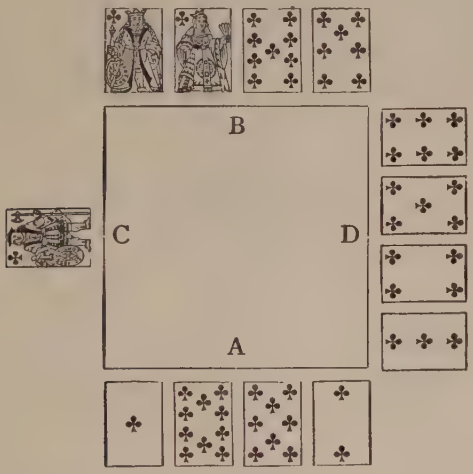
1.—B leads kn; D plays 8; A plays ace; C plays 4.

The play of the kn marks the k, qu, and at least two others with B. D playing the 8 is notice to A that C has most likely four or more trumps. A should, however, play the ace, and—

2.—A leads 10; C plays 5; B plays 2; D plays 9.

This leaves the option with B, who, not being strong enough to take the 10, passes, although he knows that A has no more to give him, B must take the chance of getting the lead to draw C's remaining trumps before C may make them by ruffing. Had B held the 9 he would then

have taken the 10. With ace and two more, either in trumps or plain suits, pass the kn led by partner. If you suspect that your partner has led the kn from weakness you will or will not cover as it may suit your hand. You should at all times be on the alert not to block partner in his effort to exhaust the trumps. You may sometimes deem it best to get out of partner's way in trumps, even when you cannot by any play hinder him in drawing all the trumps, simply to avoid the lead. As:—



1.—B leads 7; D plays 3; A plays ace; C plays kn.

2.—A leads 2; C discards; B plays qu; D plays 4.

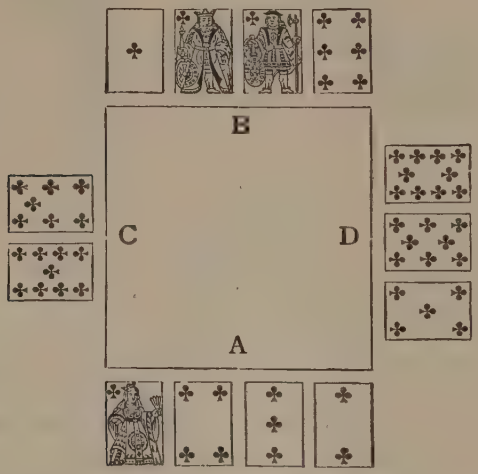
3.—B leads k; D plays 5; A plays 10; C discards.

A plays the 10 here; B knows that A *must* have the 8 or 6, and that he evidently does not want the lead. A knows that B must have the 9, and as B is marked with winning cards A, very properly, plays so that he can avoid taking the lead from B.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SUIT ECHO.

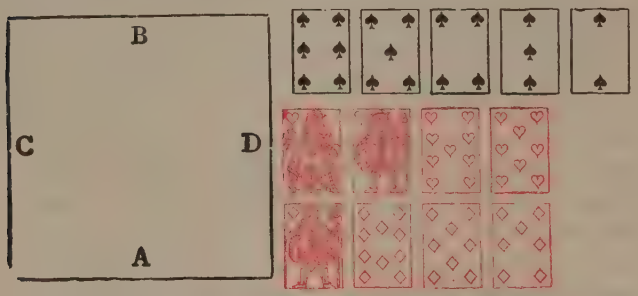
When trumps have been exhausted, or when the opponents are leading them, or at any time when it is evident to partner that you do not want trumps led, you can show strength or a master card in a suit by employing the same order of play as you do in calling for trumps. Suppose that trumps are out, or the long ones with partner or opponents, and partner is leading his winning cards in a plain suit—as under



1.—B leads k; D plays 5; A plays 3; C plays 7.
2.—B leads ace; D plays 8; A plays 2; C plays 9.
A shows B by his play of 3 then 2, that he has the qu,

and B goes on with the suit. Negative inference may be valuable here, for if A *did not* echo under the above circumstances B would *change* the suit, knowing that the qu was surely against. The inference is that if A could assist he would proclaim it, and if he does not he says to partner, "When you play your master cards in the suit *change* the suit, for I can give no help in this suit." This play is often of great value and is very practicable. It can be used in a variety of ways and under widely different phases. Suppose partner opens the hand with kn of trumps; you have not one; your discard is from your weakest suit, but it may happen that it is injudicious to do so, owing to the unusual character of your hand. For example, you hold ace, k, 10, 9, 8, 4, 3, d; k, qu, 10, c; k, qu, 4, h; and no spade—trumps. It would not do to discard from the h or c suits, as it would greatly impair their value, and as you have no trumps to help partner you must give him all the assistance in your power in the plain suits. If you discard the 3 d, partner will read this as your weakest suit, but if you discard first the 4 then 3, you proclaim it as your best. Partner will so read, and if he succeeds in exhausting the trumps, he will lead you a strengthening card of the suit, and a great game will follow. It matters not who is leading trumps, you can show your best suit by this play. Take the above example, and suppose that one of the opponents opened the hand with trumps, then your discard should be from your best protected suit—the diamond, and partner would read it as such; but it is unusual to make more than *one* discard from your best suit, as you make the *one* discard to show the suit, and then change to your weakest suit and throw it, if practicable, entirely away. Here you may be forced to discard three or possibly four cards from this suit if

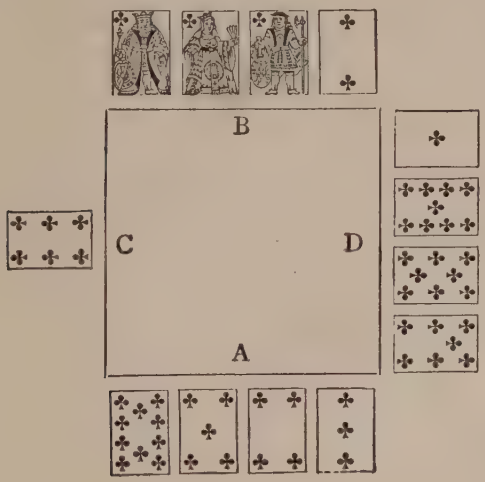
the opponents persist in trumps, and you run the risk of partner reading this as a worthless three or four card suit, if you discard it in 3, 4, 8 order. In fact he must so read. He would reason, in the event of your making three or more discards from the suit, "This must be partner's worthless suit, for if he has any master cards in it then it must have been an unusually strong one, and he would have echoed in it; not echoing he can have no more of the suit." Discard in this order—4, 3, 8—and partner will read the play. Here, for instance:—



A opens the hand with qu c, trumps. It will not do for D to discard a card from either the h or d suits. D knows that he will have to make two or more discards, if A persists in trumps. The spade suit is absolutely worthless, and D must discard from it despite the rule, and discards from the lowest up, and *not* echoing in it partner will read the situation and give D fair h and d. It is perhaps, unnecessary to call attention to the fact that care must be taken that you may complete the echo, or that you can show that you had an opportunity to echo and did not, or you may deceive partner. If you are reasonably sure that you will make two or more discards before partner gets in, you run no risk. If you are not

sure of this, then you must carefully consider the situation.

When you echo strength in a suit, or a master card, it is direct and positive information, and here lies the great advantage. Negative inference may leave partner in doubt and put him to a guess—a choice of two suits; but there is no mistaking this play, and it often enables you to preserve intact a medium weak suit. In echoing a master card in a plain suit that partner is leading, when he knows that you do not want trumps led, you have no risk to run, and you should never fail to make the play when you have the opportunity. If you do not echo, partner will *change* the suit, and your master card or cards may not make. If you do not echo partner *must* change the suit, on the same principle that if you have an opportunity to echo four or more trumps to partner's call or lead, and do not do so, partner *must* give you less than four. Once more:—



1.—B leads k (plain suit); D plays ace; A plays 3; C plays 6.

2 (B to lead).—B leads kn; D plays 7; A plays 5; C discards.

3.—B leads qu; D plays 8; A plays 4; C discards. B now gives A the 10.

CHAPTER XIII.

FINESSE.

THIS term is applicable to any form of strategy, underplay or artifice. The general player is acquainted with only the simplest forms of finesse, such as B holding the major tenace and one or more small, to a low card led by A, plays qu, taking the chance that king is to his right. Many players imagine that finesse is an artifice to be practiced only by third hand; it belongs, however, to every seat at the table. Fourth hand may refuse to take a trick; leader and second hand may underplay. You cannot lay down specific rules governing finesse. Finesse belongs to the highest order of play, and can only be practiced profitably by players of experience and good whist judgment. Rob whist of finesse, and you take from the game its greatest charm.

You must always recollect, when planning any finesse, that if your finesse loses, the immediate loss is nearly always modified, provided, of course, that your finesse was justifiable, or turned into a gain in after play; for you have thrown the lead, and what appears to be the loss of a trick is frequently equivalent to a gain of two. By your finesse you have made yourself last player in the next round, which is a position of advantage, and you may command the play to your subsequent gain. Finesse may not be considered *per se*. If B, for instance, finesses against only one card, this one card—barring any information to the contrary—is just as likely to be

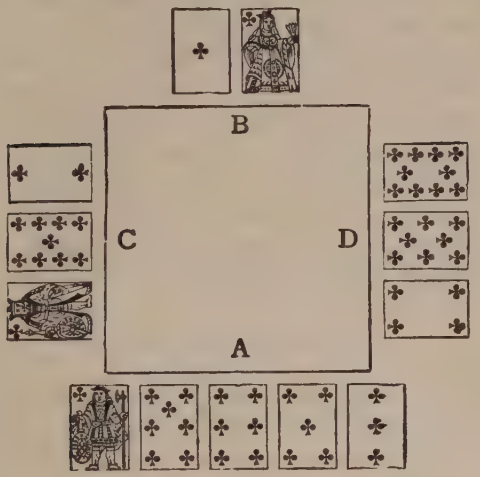
with D as with C, and the chances of the finesse winning or losing are exactly even; but it must not be forgotten that there is a chance of B's card that would have won, had he not finessed, not making afterwards, so that if you examine any finesse from the single-suit standpoint it will not bear analysis. The key to the question as to whether any finesse is justifiable must be found in the hand of the one who makes the finesse, viewed in conjunction with the stage of the hand, the previous play and the state of the score. All third-hand finesse in partner's suit may be said to be unsound if judged from the single-suit standpoint, but this is not the key to the merit of a finesse. The immediate success or failure of a finesse has likewise nothing to do with determining the merit of the play.

The varieties of finesse are infinite, and there are so many things to be considered that modify or render finesse either obligatory or out of the question, that no attempt will be made to do more than give a few general hints and illustrations. The art of finessing must be learned from long experience and practice with fine players—not from the books. The play of third hand in reference to finessing in plain suits, will first be considered.

Finesse Proper—Ace, Queen. (*Third Hand.*)

The simplest form of finesse is the finesse proper; *i. e.*, to a small card led by partner, you holding ace, queen and one or more, finesse the queen. This finesse you usually make, for, if king is to your left guarded, it must make. About the only disposition of the cards which insures a loss is when you find the king single to your left. It is usually unfortunate when any finesse loses to

the only card opponent has of the suit. Such situations are, however, comparatively rare, and generally the play and the character of your hand will warn you when such is likely. Early in the play of the hand this finesse is nearly always right. Holding ace, queen only, you do not, as a rule, finesse, for the reason that if the king is against, you have but little chance of catching it if in second hand. If you hold only two cards in the suit, the king is almost sure to be more than singly guarded; besides, if you finesse and it wins, you return the ace, and if partner has not the king he has not control of the suit. For example:—



1.—A leads 5; C plays 2; B plays qu; D plays 4.

2.—B leads ace; D plays 8; A plays 3; C plays 9.

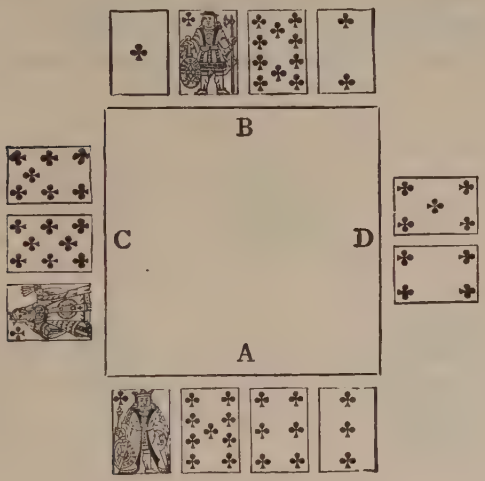
C is in command for the third round, and A must lead another round in order to clear up the suit. On the

other hand, if B plays ace, and returns the queen, it forces the play of k and leaves A in command for the third round. The earlier in the play of a suit you effect its establishment the more advantageous it is. B should endeavor to so play, no matter what cards he holds, that *A* may be in command not later than the third round. Gain, in the suit in which B makes the major tenace finesse, is much more likely to occur when B holds four or five cards in the suit. In trumps B does not make the major tenace finesse if (1) partner has led trumps to stop a cross-ruff, or for other reasons it is obviously best to have two rounds at all hazards; (2) if partner on the first round, second hand, puts on ace to a small card led, and then at once leads trumps, you should play ace and return qu irrespective of the number you hold, as partner's play is indicative of great strength, and you are not justified in making even the " proper finesse." If partner had made a successful finesse it becomes your duty, if expedient, to follow up the advantage. Suppose A leads a small card, and B wins with the kn or 10, and does not return the suit, A must give B the opportunity to reap full advantage of the finesse, by leading the suit again through C.

Ace, Knave—Finesse.

Holding ace, knave and others, or ace, knave, 10, the kn or 10 is a fair finesse. You credit your partner with an honor, especially if an original lead of the hand, or his first lead, and your finesse is against one card, and it is an even chance that the card is to your right. It is always understood that the play, your hand, the score and the stage of the game justify finessing. If you do not have a good reason for finessing aside from the bare idea of gaining an immediate trick, you do not finesse—

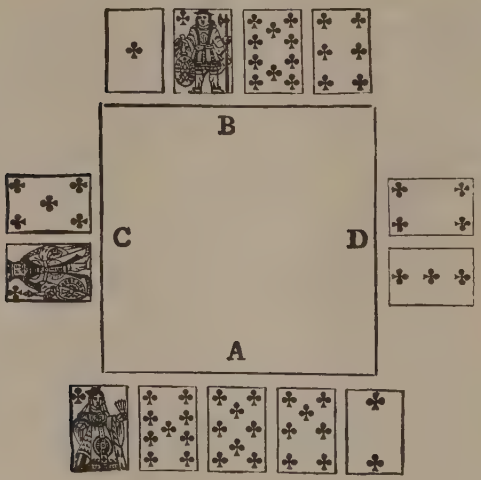
but play ace. Holding ace, knave and others, or ace, kn, 10, you do not finesse, as a rule, if you hold more than four cards. If partner has led from strength in the suit, that is, numerical strength, you must be careful how you finesse with any holding, for one or both of the opponents must be short, and there is not a normal second round. If partner leads a small card, like the 2 or 3, this danger is not imminent. Take this case :—



1.—A leads 3; C plays 7; B plays 10; D plays 4.

B, holding the deuce, knows that A has led from just four cards, and that five are against; here the suit is likely to live two rounds, besides, if B has a fair hand, he will now lead trumps. As the cards happen to lie, B's finesse is a clear gain. Reverse the cards of C and

D, the finesse then loses, and the qu makes. It must be understood that B would not finesse the 10 here, unless it left his hand in good condition in the event of the finesse losing. If B's finesse fails, he is then last player to the next trick, and if this is not an advantage to B, it is one good reason why he should not finesse. You observe that B should not finesse singly with the idea of gaining an immediate trick by the play, for it is an even chance that the finesse fails. He should, therefore, see *more* than this mere chance, he should see a fair chance to gain a trick in the subsequent play of another suit, to compensate him in the event of his finesse ultimately losing a trick in the suit. Here is another case:—



1.—A leads 7; C plays 5; B plays 6; D plays 4.

B knows that A has either k, 9, 8, or qu, 9, 8, and must either throw the ace or pass the trick. The first thing B should do is to carefully examine his hand. He knows it is an even chance that the 7 will win the trick. B also knows that if he passes (and the 7 holds the trick) A will, if he has even a fair hand, lead trumps, and this feature of it must be considered. Then, in the event of the 7 losing to either k or qu, does it leave B in good position? These are the things that B must weigh. Now, suppose that B holds ace, qu, 10, 4 of trumps, king, kn and small, king and small in the other suits—he decides at once to pass, for if the trick goes to D his position is most excellent; for no matter what D leads, B, most likely, recovers at once. There is this in favor of passing—if it wins, the play is very informatory, as A reads that the suit is as good as established, and with a fair, helping hand A will lead trumps.

King, Knave—Finesse.

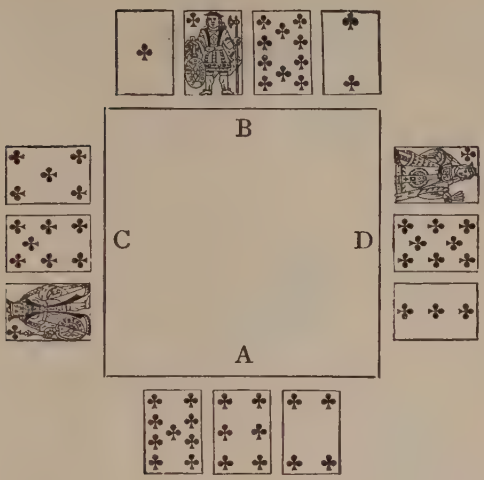
Holding king, knave only, or with one small, play king, and return the knave, and let partner judge if the finesse should be made—if any. Holding king, knave and two small, to a small card led, you may finesse knave, if your hand warrants it. If, in the event of the finesse failing, throwing the lead is of no benefit to you, do not finesse, for you are rarely ever justified in making any finesse for the one suit alone.

King, Ten—Finesse.

Holding king, 10 and others to a small card led, the 10 is a good finesse at times. If partner leads a very

small card—say the 2, 3 or 4, and you hold king, 10, or king, 10, 9 and one or more small, and you are in a position that warrants any finessing, the 10 or 9 is a fair finesse. If the lead is from a suit headed by the knave, the finesse is against the queen, and it is an even chance that this card is to your right, and your 10 or 9 forces the ace. If both ace, qu are to your right, the finesse wins; if the reverse they must, of course, make. If you find the qu to your left the finesse may result in loss, it *may* lose, because it is understood that the finesse is not made for this one suit alone. If partner opened the suit with qu high the finesse is against the knave, and if to your right the finesse is in your favor, if to the left it loses. If the lead is from the ace up, and the qu, kn are both to your right the finesse wins; if to the left, the finesse may lose a trick. It is the practice of most players to avoid finesse in partner's suit, and the rule is sound as a general principle. The advantage likely to be gained from throwing the lead, in case the finesse fails, should be well considered before making this or any other speculative finesse.

When a low card is led, you know, if the lead is from strength, that the card led is the fourth-best, and that the leader has three cards of the suit higher than the one led; knowing this you will or will not finesse against *one* card as the situation warrants. When partner's lead is from evident weakness, your finesse may be deep, very deep, if an attempt to take the trick endangers your command of the suit. Suppose the following:—



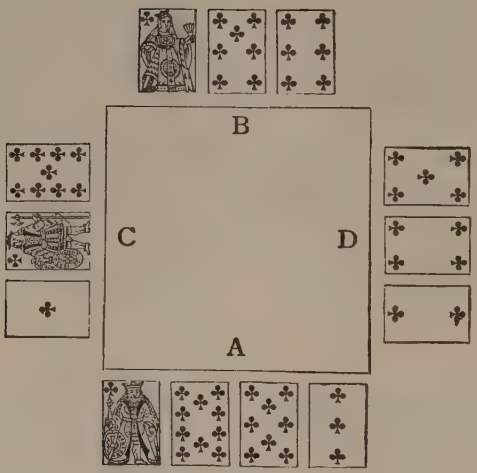
1.—A leads 9; C plays 5; B plays 2; D plays qu.

B knows that the lead is forced, and, unless B is very anxious to have the lead, it would be folly to play the ace, although B knows that either k or qu, possibly both, are to his left. B can gain nothing by putting up the ace, for this will leave both king and qu against, and he may not take another trick in the suit, besides the command is at once transferred to the opponents.

Finesse is not confined to high cards, and when you get far into a suit you may finesse with your small cards —say with 7, 5, you finesse the 5 against the possible 6. Besides, if you have carefully noted the fall of the cards, the data will often insure you against any possible loss.

Finesse Obligatory.

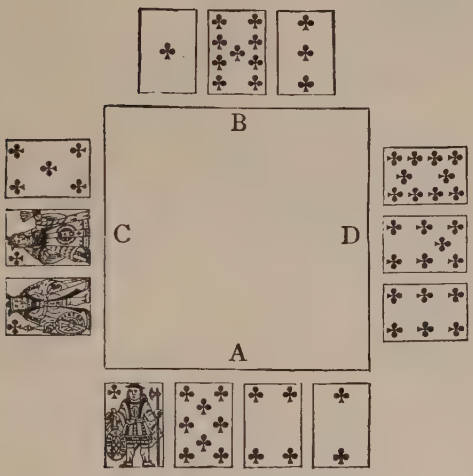
Finesse may be obligatory; suppose this case:—



1.—A leads 3; C plays 9; B plays qu; D plays 2.
2.—B leads 7; D plays 4; A plays 8; C plays kn.

A makes an obligatory finesse, he knows that the ace, possibly the kn also, is with C, but he must play the 8, or he will not take a trick in the suit, besides giving up

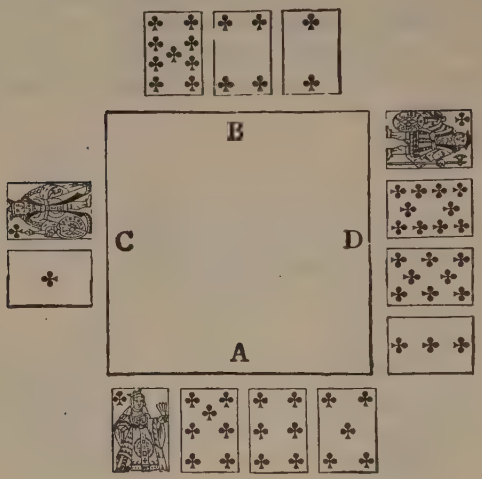
the command. Finesse in this form is often, very often, thrust upon you, and there is no escape from it—the finesse must be made. This arbitrary form of finesse presents itself in a great variety of ways, and should always be made, or you lose command of the suit and possibly a trick or two besides. Take this case:—



1.—A leads 2; C plays qu; B plays ace; D plays 6.

2.—B leads 9; D plays 7; A must play the 4; he knows the k is surely to his left, possibly the 10 also, but he must finesse against the 10; to put up the knave would be an egregious blunder, for in any event the con-

trol would be lost together with the trick. (D should have covered the 9.) Again:—



1.—A leads 5; C plays k; B plays 2; D plays 3.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays 10; A plays 6; C plays ace.

A refuses to put up the qu even though the trick is against him, trusting that C has ace single. A trick may be lost if A puts up the qu, even though C has three of the suit originally. Give C the 2 that B holds in the last illustration, and then:—

1.—A leads 5; C plays k; B plays 4; D plays 3.

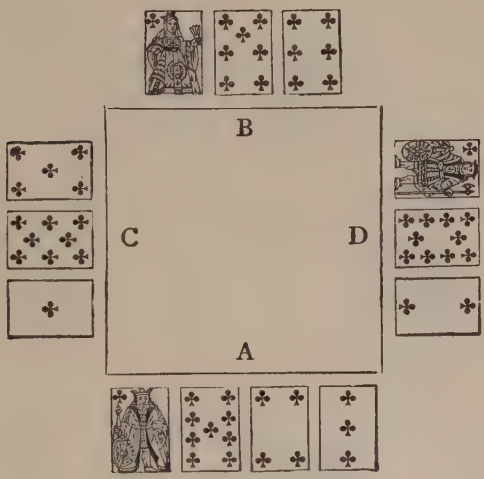
2 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays 10; A plays 6; C plays 2.

Now, if trumps come out and D leads the suit, either 8 or kn, A must still underplay with the 7, and if A leads it he leads the 7, and must make the qu. Had A put

up the qu on the second round, he must have lost every trick in the suit.

Finesse by Trial.

The opportunity for making this form of finesse, second hand, is of very frequent occurrence, and is often missed. All forms of finesse, or subtle tries for gain away from the routine ruts, require skill and good judgment, and this finesse is no exception. For example:—

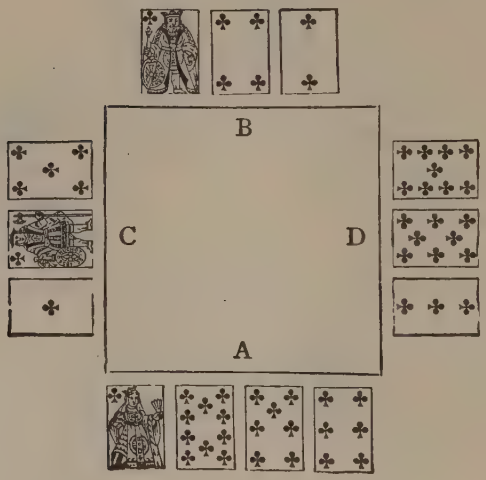


1.—A leads 3; C plays 5; B plays qu; D plays 2.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 4; C plays 8; B plays 6; D plays 10.

C finesses the 8, speculating that the k may be with A and the kn with D; B cannot have kn. Care must be

taken, in making this finesse, in plain suits, as to whether the suit is likely to go three times with your left-hand opponent. When you make this form of finesse, you should usually be prepared to lead trumps at once in the event of the finesse winning. Partner should take the cue and carefully consider the advisability of a trump lead when it is evident that partner has, as here, underplayed, for strength in trumps is always a justification for this finesse. Take this instance:—



1.—A leads 6; C plays 5; B plays k; D plays 3.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 7; C plays kn; knowing that B has not the qu. This is, in fact, not a finesse, but

simply correct second-hand play. Again: Suppose A leads the 2, from qu, 9, 3, 2; C plays 4—holding ace, 10, 4; B plays kn; D the k. Now, if A leads the suit again, C plays 10, finessing against the possible qu in B's hand.

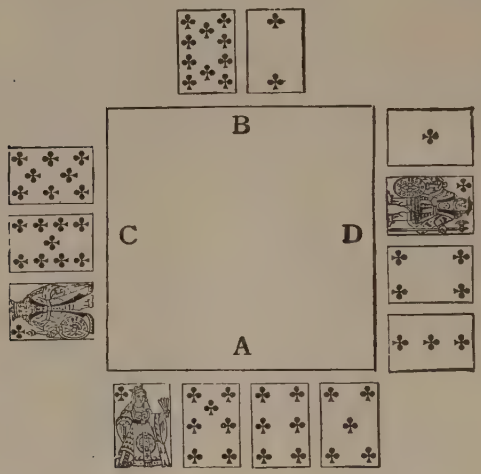
Finesse may at times be very deep to make or save a game. You will often find yourself in a position where it is evident that nothing but deep and persistent finesse will save a trick. Likewise when partner leads you the highest of three as a strengthening play, and it finds you but moderately strong you may finesse deeply, and if the suit is again led—if necessary—finesse again, and in this way husband your strength and keep control. You may at times finesse deeply in trumps, particularly near the close of the hand. Finesse in the first few rounds of the hand is mainly speculative, but after the play has advanced the inferences you have drawn, both positive and negative, may often direct you to successful finesse. You may finesse upon the very first lead of all, as, holding ace, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, you lead the 4. Later on you may, holding the long trump or for other reasons, lead small from ace, k, or k, qu and others, trusting to partner for the first trick.

All finesse is speculative, and while finesse has been subdivided under different heads, the various modes are all strategic tries for gain that may be classed as theoretic.

The Return Finesse.

This form of underplay has been termed the "return finesse." It is finessing upon the return of the adversary's suit—leading through the moderately strong hand up to

the announced weakness of the right-hand opponent. Here is an example:—



1.—A leads 5; C plays 8; B plays 10; D plays kn.

2.—D leads 3; A plays 6; C plays 9, B plays 2.

D here makes the return finesse and C's 9 makes.

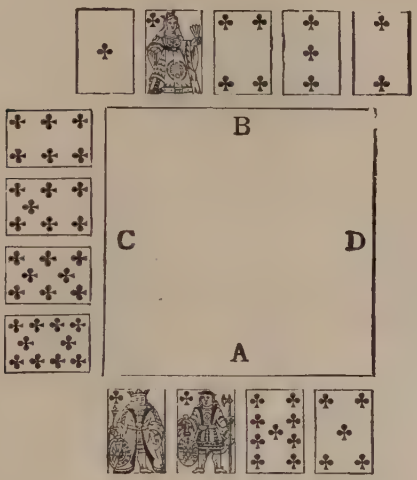
3 (D to lead).—D leads 4, A plays 7; C plays k; B renounces.

D's return finesse being successful, he is enabled to count the hands and at trick three again leads small through A, who, by the finesse, is rendered powerless.

The Finesse on Partner.

You may finesse on the return of partner's suit, forcing him to play his best that you may remain with the

command. This at times may be very advantageous. Suppose the following:—



1.—A leads 5; C plays 6; B plays qu; D trumps.

Eventually trumps come out—B in the lead; he reads that he is longer in the suit than A, and that the king must make, if against.

2.—B leads 2; D renounces; A plays kn; C plays 7.

3.—A leads k; C plays 8; B plays 3; D renounces.

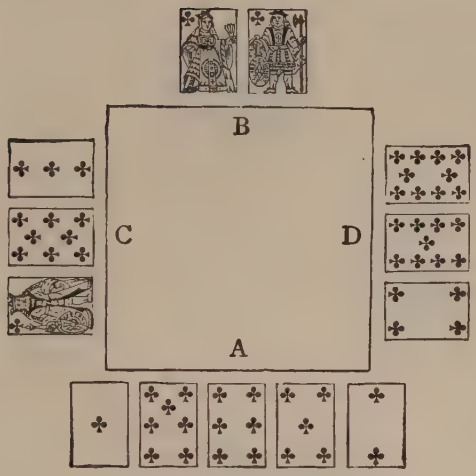
A now leads the 9; B wins with ace, and the 4 makes.

CHAPTER XIV.

UNDERPLAY.

UNDERPLAY is a species of finesse, sometimes called "holding up." It is an artifice practiced by the expert —a coup, a deviation from routine play, and if well judged may be very effective. It requires, however, the keenest whist perception, and the most accurate sense of the situation to practice it with profit. The purpose of underplay is to make a trick or more that could not be made by ordinary conventional play. It is holding up the winning card, refusing to take the trick or finessing upon the lead. It may be made by any player at the table. Being an extempore stratagem, based upon the unusual character of the hand, or the fall of the cards, no rules can be formulated to meet this exigency. The student can best gain an idea of this artifice by examples.

Underplay by Leader.



This is A's best suit, he has five small trumps and small cards in the other suits. The hand is exceptional; if he leads the ace the suit is valueless; he opens with the fourth-best—a departure from conventional play; ordinarily the ace would be led. Here the leader finesses upon the lead—underplays.

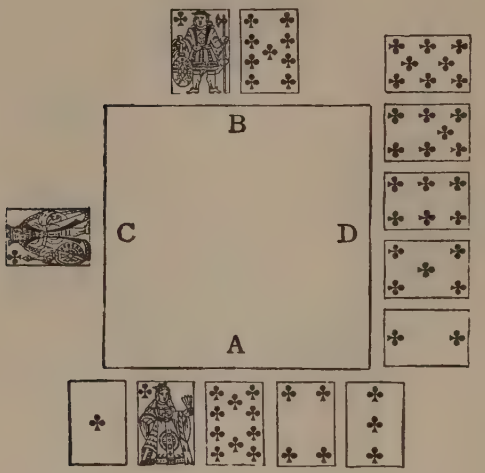
1.—A leads 5; C plays 3; B plays kn; D plays 4.

2 (A to lead).—A leads 2; C plays 8; B plays qu; D plays 9.

A underplays again—holding up the ace.

Second hand must be on the alert for this finesse by leader.

Here is another example of underplay by leader.



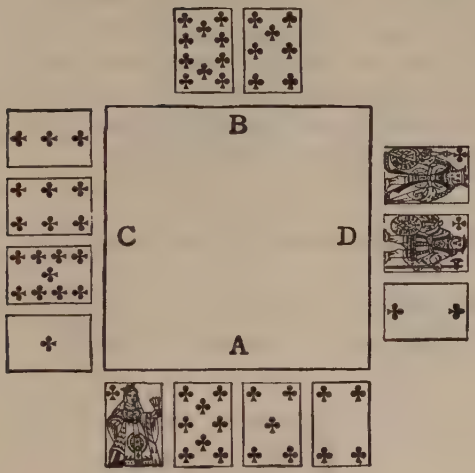
1.—A leads ace; C plays k; B plays 9; D plays 2.

2.—A leads 4; C discards; B plays kn; D plays 5.

A underplays with the 4; the first round disclosing the fact that C has no more; B the kn or no more or calling, and that D has four more. A has fair strength in trumps and does not object to taking the chance of forcing B, if he has none of the suit. A knows that if he leads the qu, C will most surely trump, but if he underplays the four C may risk the best card with D.

Underplay by Second Hand.

Here is an example of underplay by second hand:—



First Trick.—A leads 4; C plays 3; B plays 10; D plays kn.

Second Trick.—(A to lead) A plays 5; C plays 6; B plays 7; D plays k.

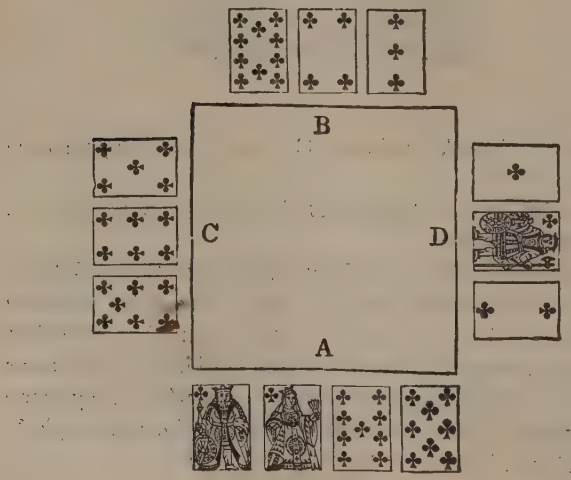
C underplays the second round trusting the trick to D. A cannot have both k and qu, and unless B has finessed the first round, D will win the trick and C will be left with a tenace over the leader. D should here lead trumps even if moderately strong in them, and when they come out, or when B is exhausted, D will lead the 2 through A, and C D will have four tricks in A's suit.

Underplay—Third Hand.

The difference between finesse proper and underplay third hand is usually this: you finesse with the hope that your finesse may win the trick; you underplay knowing that the trick will go to fourth hand—the object being to place the lead. Suppose your partner, late in hand, leads you the 6—trumps, second hand puts on 7; you hold k, 8, 3, with one trick to make, to save, or win the game, you play 8, and your king must give you the needed trick, as you now are last player.

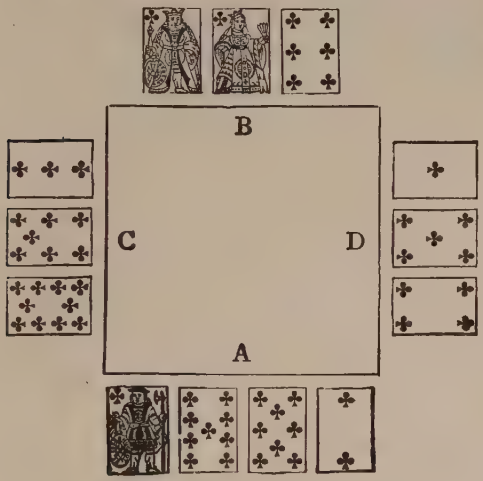
Underplay—Fourth Hand.

Fourth hand is, perhaps, in the best position to hold up or underplay. Suppose this case:—



First Trick.—A leads k; C plays 5; B plays 3; D plays 2.

A shows (to D) but qu and two others by the play, and if he goes on with the suit, giving B the ace, D makes two tricks in the suit, for by the underplay he preserved to himself the perfect tenace. Here is another phase:—



First Trick.—A leads 2; C plays 7; B plays qu; D plays 4.

D has a wretchedly weak hand in suit, with three trumps, say—ace, 10, 3; if he takes the trick, he must open one of his weak suits, and he notes that C has played the 7; he may be calling; if so, his trumps are excellent for answering. A has shown but four in suit by the lead of the 2.

Second Trick.—B returns k; D plays ace; A plays 8;

C plays 3, and D is in to answer the call, and a great game may result from D's holding up the ace the first round.

Do not forget that you must do the closest figuring, weighing every phase of the situation before attempting to gain by this strategy. If you do not exercise such precaution you will lose more tricks than you will gain. Coups are not common, neither are they common play, and, to be successful, must be practiced with the most scrupulous care.

CHAPTER XV.

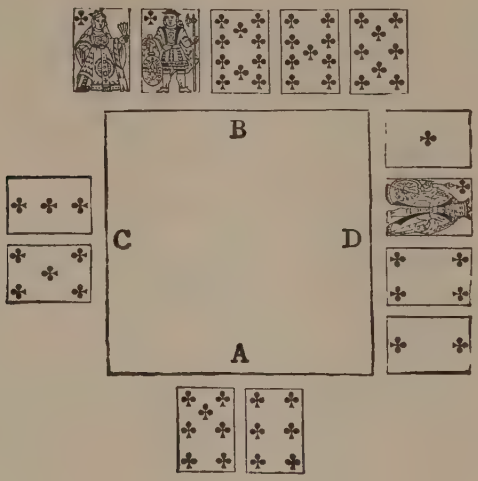
THE DISCARD.

You must exercise care and good judgment in discarding. This is a matter of prime importance. Your first discard is as significant as your original lead. There are general rules governing the original discard, but it is impossible to formulate specific rules for second and later discards. For discards late in hand, you must be guided by the fall of the cards and the character of your hand. Many a game is thrown away by injudicious discarding. You are sometimes put to the discard when you have no data to direct you, but, in the majority of cases, the fall of the cards will assist you. You will find that the subject of discarding is worthy of much more consideration than is usually bestowed upon it.

Original Discard.

Your original discard is from your weakest suit, the suit in which you are the least likely to make a trick. It is understood, however, that this is before strength in trumps has been declared by the opponents. If partner has asked for trumps, or led them, it does not affect this rule—you still discard from your weakest suit. If the opponents have first called or first led trumps, your first discard is from your best protected suit. When trumps are declared against you, you play a defensive game, and husband what little strength you have in your weak suits—not weaken them by discarding from them.

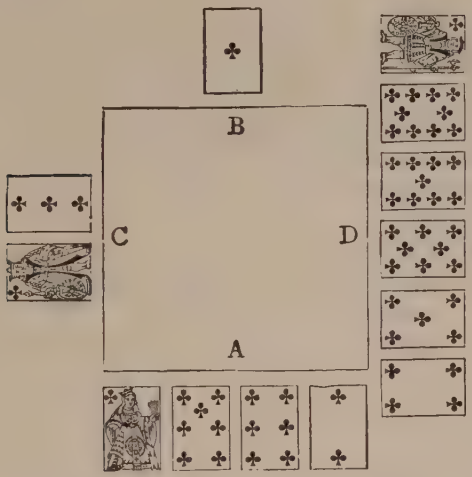
When trumps are declared in your favor, you play an aggressive game, fearlessly weakening your weak suits and keeping your long suits intact. If, however, at the time you are put to the discard it is demonstrable to both yourself and partner that the balance of power in trumps will ultimately be in your favor, notwithstanding the fact that your opponents have first called or first led them, your discard should be from your weakest suit, and partner should so read. So, also, if partner has called or is leading trumps, and the fall clearly shows that the strength and command of trumps must in the end be against you, you should put yourself upon the defensive and discard from your best protected suit. For instance:



First Trick.—D leads 2; A plays 6; C plays 3; B plays qu.

Second Trick.—B leads 8; D plays k; A plays 7; C plays 5.

Third Trick (B to lead).—B plays 9; D plays ace—A should here discard from his weakest suit, and C from his best protected suit, for although D first led trumps, the command and numerical strength is marked with B. Again. suppose D deals and turns the 8, and the trumps lie as under—



First Trick.—A leads 2; C plays 3; B plays ace; D plays kn. (C plays small. *See* note e, p. 106.)

D shows the sequence of kn, 10, 9, 8.

Second Trick.—C leads k; B's discard here should be from his best protected suit, for it is evident to A and B that trumps are unquestionably against them. Once more: A leads 3; C plays 2; B, having no trump, discards from his best suit, for it is evident that nine trumps are with the opponents.

There is a dual purpose in the conventional mode of discarding, for it points to your weakest and strongest suits in either a positive or negative manner, and this information is of the utmost importance to partner, and, aside from imparting this information, it is the proper mode of play, even if your own hand is only considered, as it increases your chances of taking tricks. You must bear in mind that it is your first discard, made before you have had a lead, that is so important. If you have had the lead before being put to the discard, the suit you opened is supposed to be your best and longest suit; and your discards then may be such as you deem best, as you have already informed partner of your best suit, and should you subsequently discard from the suit you originally opened, the fact remains that this suit was your best suit.

Early in the hand it is dangerous to unguard an honor, or blank an ace, and you should be careful about discarding a singleton. It may turn out that the suit of which you hold a single card is your partner's great suit, and you may throw away the only chance you have of getting your partner in the lead by parting with this single card. If trumps are in your favor and partner is playing the strong game, you may then with less hesitation unguard the honor or throw the singleton.

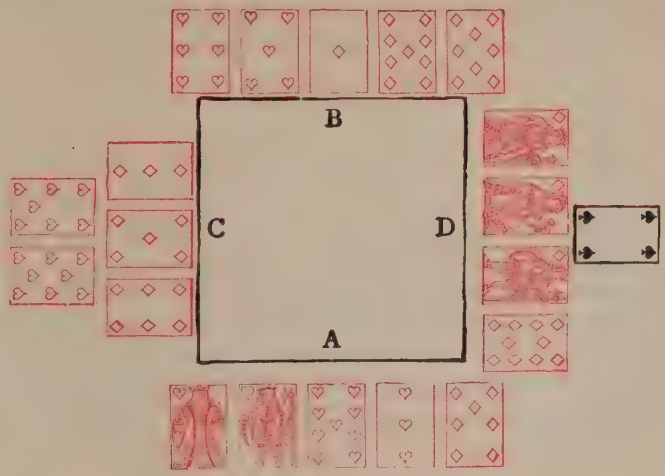
If the play reveals the fact that partner has no card of the suit you wish led, or that it is unlikely that he will get in, you may by discard show it as your weak suit, to induce your left-hand opponent to lead it up to you.

If it is evident that you will be put to two, three or more discards, and you have two suits of about equal strength from which to make them, it is generally best to select one of the suits and *stick* to it. For example:—Hearts—trumps—are out, and one of your opponents

has four spades to bring in—marked in his hand. You hold four each of clubs and diamonds, say qu or kn up, and partner discards from say clubs, you should discard the diamonds; in this way you will together protect the two suits, partner keeping his diamond suit intact, and you the club suit.

Discarding from Partner's Strong Suit.

If you have but two or three cards of partner's strong suit, you should carefully consider the situation before you discard any of them If the opponents are left with the thirteenth trump, they will not part with it if they suspect that you are short in your partner's suit, but will hold it up until you have played the last card of the suit partner is bringing in; and if the lead is subsequently thrown into your hand, you will have no card of the suit to give partner, and loss may result. The following illustration will make this clear:—



(B, trick 8, discarded deuce h.)

D has the thirteenth trump—spades. Eight tricks have been gathered; A is in at trick 9 and—

Trick Nine.—A leads kn h; C plays 7; B plays 5; D plays 10 d.

D refuses to part with the last trump—if he trumps this trick, he loses two tricks.

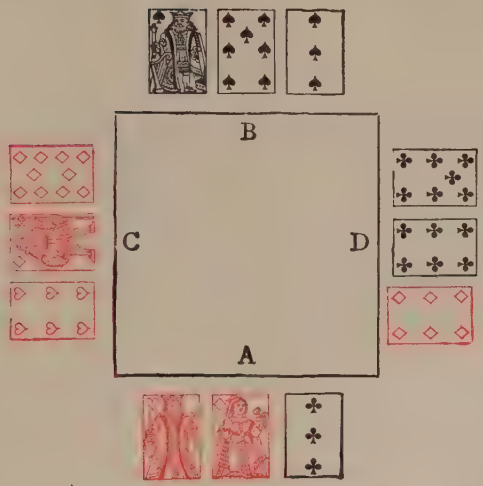
Trick Ten.—A leads k h; C plays 8; B plays 6; D trumps.

Trick Eleven.—D leads k d; A plays 7 d; C plays 3 d; B plays ace d.

B must now lead a d and A B do not take another trick. But suppose B had discarded the 8 d at trick 8 instead of the 2 h, it is then evident that A B must make three tricks out of the five. Here bad play in the way of discarding loses a clear trick. If B had held four hearts here instead of three, even then he should not have thrown one of them, but instead the diamonds down to the ace. All B needed in diamonds was the single ace for re-entry, and it did not matter when D used his thirteenth trump, A B could lose but the single trick.

Discarding a Trump.

In the last stages of the hand you are sometimes put to discard, holding a winning card of two plain suits, the opponent holding a losing card in one of them, but uncertain which. In such cases, if you have a losing trump that will be drawn, throw it away if the opportunity is offered, as a card may be thrown to the next trick that will aid you to make the correct discard. Suppose the following:—



Clubs trumps; D is marked with the 7, 6 and a losing heart or diamond but uncertain which.

Trick Ten.—B leads k s; D trumps; A undertrumps; C plays 6 h.

Here A properly retains the winning h and d, and throws the losing trump, knowing that D would at once draw it, trusting that C may throw a card that will aid him in determining the one unknown card in D's hand. A knows that there is but one heart in play other than his king, and when C throws the 6 h, it marks D with a

d absolute. D now leads the thirteenth trump to which A throws the k h, and the qu d makes.

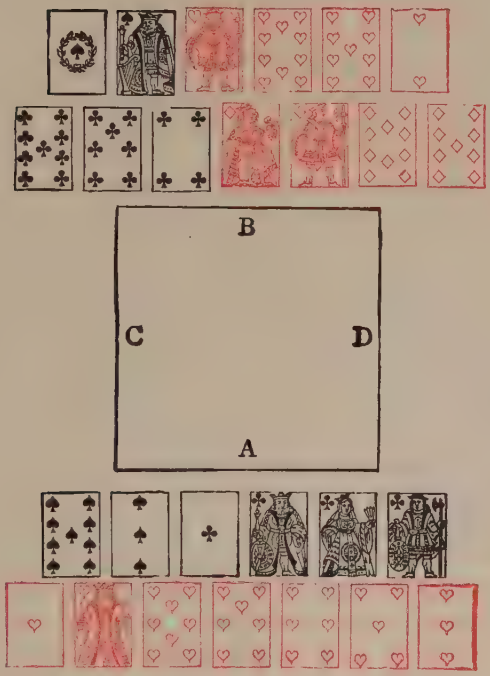
The Discard Echo.

If partner leads trumps from great strength in them, and you are forced to discard, having no trumps, and your hand is so constructed that you must discard from the very suit you wish partner to lead you—when he has exhausted the trumps of the opponents—echo in the suit. For example:—Hearts trumps, you hold k, qu, kn spades, qu, kn, 10 diamonds, ace, qu, 10, 8, 7, 4, 3 clubs. Partner opens the hand with trumps, you discard first the 4 and then the 3 of clubs, and partner will read the play and will at the proper time lead you the best club he holds. If you discard the 3 and the 4 from the club suit, partner will read it as your weakest suit and loss might result.

Unblocking by Discard.

You may sometimes block your partner's great suit by injudicious discarding. It often occurs that partner opens the hand with a trump lead, you holding but one, two or three trumps. Now, suppose in such a case you have good strength in two of the plain suits, and fair strength in the third; you assume that your partner's strong suit, if he has any, is the one in which you are weakest, and your discards from this suit should be such that you run no risk of blocking him in the event of its being his great suit. Your suit may be say kn, 10, 9, 2, and, if you suspect this suit to be your partner's great

suit, you should discard the 9 and then the 10. The following illustration will make this clear :—



(6 c turned with D.)

First Trick.—A leads k c; C plays 8; B plays 4; D plays 2.

Second Trick.—A leads kn c; C plays 10; B plays 7; D plays 3.

Third Trick.—A leads ace c; C discards a d; B plays 9 c; D plays 5 c.

Fourth Trick.—A leads qu c; C discards; B throws 9 h; D plays 6 c.

B reads that A's suit cannot be d as it is his (B's) best, besides C by discard shows it as his best. If A has a great suit it must be h, and probably a very long one, for A can have but few if any d, as B has four, and C most likely had five originally. B very properly throws the 9 h, preparing to get out of A's way in hearts. If he carelessly threw the 2, he would block a great game for A; for in this case the qu h will fall the first or second round, and B's sequence of kn, 10, 9 must hopelessly block A's suit, and B must eventually lose two tricks to C in diamonds. This neat point in discarding may occur in a variety of ways and at almost any stage of the hand.

In the middle or end hand you may hold the ace (single) of a suit that has not been led, and the play may develop that partner *must* be strong in the suit—hold k, qu and others or the game is lost. He is drawing the last trumps from the opponents, you must discard, you hold losing cards in the suits in which the adversaries are strong, and the singleton ace in the suit partner must be strong in to win—you should throw the ace, no other play will save the game. This play, it is true, may possibly lose a trick, but the game is lost in any event if partner has not control of the suit. For an illustration of this play *see* "Critical Endings."

It is to guard against situations such as these that you do not blank an ace by discard. Neither do you throw

away a singleton early in the hand, for you may find this apparently worthless card of great value to give to your partner later on, if he shows strength in the suit. Suppose C shows clubs, D spades, as their suits; you hold a singleton in hearts, you should not throw it away without due consideration; for if partner has anything, it must be in the suit of which you only hold this single card, and he may have no card of entry. The opponents will not lead this suit, unless forced to, and you should keep this single card, especially if you have a re-entry card in the opponents' suits.

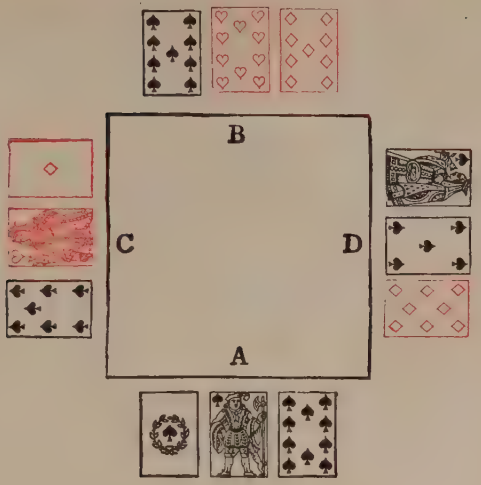
General Hints on Discarding.

You are often influenced in your first discard by knowing about how many discards you will be forced to make. Suppose you have shown partner your suit by opening the hand with ace then kn; partner covers the kn with king, holding four cards in the suit, and goes in to exhaust trumps, indicating by his lead that he has also great numerical strength. You have no trump, and you know that you will be put to at least three or four discards. You hold kn, 10, 8, 2 in one suit, qu, 8, 3, 2 in the other; now, if you discard first from one suit and then from the other, you greatly weaken both suits. In such cases, select the weakest suit, and discard only from it, throwing it entirely away, if you must, and keep the one suit intact. In the above instance, if you discard the 2 from the kn high suit, and 2, 3 from the qu suit, you have ruined both suits, and you stand but little chance of taking a trick in either. Suits containing only two cards are of very little value, even if one of the cards is a high card; for instance, k and one small,

qu and one small. Such suits are better to discard from than suits of three cards in sequence even though composed of smaller cards; for example, kn, 10, 9. Suppose you have kn, 10, 8, 2 c; k, 3, 2 d; qu, 8, 7 s; with such a hand as this discard from the spade suit. If you discard the 2 c you have no suit left. If you must discard again, throw another spade.

There is nothing in whist that requires better judgment than discarding, especially in the endings. Near the end of the hand there is much to direct you to the proper discard, but you must very frequently summon to your aid the inferences you have drawn from the entire play of the hand. You can often tell what a player *cannot* have by knowing what he *must* have. Suppose A opens a hand with the k of spades, then leads qu of clubs, then ace; then 2 of hearts—trumps. The play shows that A can have no diamond. The student may ask, why? Analyze the play: A leads k s, and stops the suit, he has ace, kn and one small; qu then ace c, this marks king and two small; then 2 of hearts—this shows three more trumps, four spades, five clubs, four hearts, and there is no room for diamonds in this hand.

Many a game is thrown away by careless discarding. To be sure, at times, you are put to a pure guess, but, in the great majority of cases, either positive inference can be drawn, or negatively you can mark the suit, and the card the leader must have. C, for instance, knowing that A can have no diamonds—as in the above cited example—must not on this alone throw away the best diamond, for A may lose the lead at the eleventh or twelfth trick, and in this event B and D must have d. You must carefully consider where the lead is likely to come from. An illustration will make this clear:—



Suppose that A, early in the play, showed no diamonds, and that trumps (clubs) are out, and—

Trick Eleven.—A leads ace s; C plays 7 s; B plays 9 s; D plays 5 s.

Trick Twelve.—A leads kn s; now, if C throws the ace d, simply because he knows that A can have no d, he loses a trick. It may be a very difficult matter for C to determine where the lead is going to, or whether it is better to keep the h or d. The point is that A will lose the lead, and it is a question who has the qu s. If C can read the qu s with D, then he must endeavor to reason out from the previous fall if D is more likely to have a d than a h. The play may have been such that C cannot read D's hand, but nearly always so late as this, the cards can be located. Situations similar to this are of frequent occurrence, and they are always worthy of very careful analysis. It is in such situations as these that the in-

ferences you have drawn come to your aid and save you the one trick that is to be played for—the one trick that the player who is unable to read the cards will nearly always lose.

When you discard the best card of a suit in play, you can have no more, all trumps, or absolute control of the suit. For example, you hold a sequence of 10 to ace in a suit; you may discard the ace and show partner that you have command. If you discard the second-best card of a suit you show no more, except in a situation in which you were throwing high cards to avoid taking the lead.

Care should be taken in reference to discarding a high card of a suit not yet in play, even though you know the card must lose. It exposes your weakness in the suit and it *may* subject you to adverse finessing on the part of your right-hand opponent who will, if the suit comes up to him, finesse deeply, and in this way may catch a card of the suit in your partner's hand that would otherwise have made had you not exposed your weakness in the suit. It is always dangerous to discard a singleton when you are void of trumps, for when this suit is led your poverty is exposed upon the first round, and if the suit is led through your partner, your right-hand opponent has simply to cover your partner's card, and in this way a trick or more may be lost. It is always injudicious play to expose your utter weakness in a suit, and it is likewise often weak play to publish that you have absolute control of a suit. For example—discarding the ace from a suit not yet in play. When the game is well advanced your judgment of the situation will determine for you whether it is wise to publish information either as to your strength or weakness. So soon as your partner has shown his inability to assist you in any way, it is then

evident folly to post your two watchful adversaries, who are on the alert to take advantage of either your strength or weakness, for the enemy may profit by knowing where your strength lies by avoiding it—striking where you are weak.

Getting rid of the command of your partner's suit by discard, and at the proper moment, requires great care and good judgment, and a failure in this regard is usually very expensive. Retaining kings and queens with miserly covetousness, and throwing treys and deuces is often anything but economy. He is a wise player who knows when he is powerful only for harm and gets rid of his superfluous strength, and equally bright is the player who turns to good account his very weakness.

It not infrequently happens that in the end hand you have a very long suit which it is evident that you cannot make entire. It is absurd to retain this suit intact and run the risk of loss by discarding your weak suit or suits, for even a card like the 9 or 10 may, if retained, either win a trick or force a high card from the enemy, thus making good a card of lower rank for partner. (For an illustration of this, *see* "Critical Endings." p. 521.)

CHAPTER XVI.

LEADING TO THE DISCARD.

THERE are three modes of leading to the discard, all of which should be thoroughly understood. The discard affords a very practical means of communication. Through this medium the player conveys information, either positive or negative in character. First:

Leading to Partner's Discard.

Your partner's first discard—if made before any declaration of trumps, or if trumps are pronounced in your favor—is from his weakest suit. This is positive, and it negatively points to the suit or suits in which he has strength. If the preponderance of strength in trumps is with the adversaries, your first discard is from your strongest and best protected suit. This is also positive information, and your partner reads that the other suit or suits are weaker than the one from which you have discarded. It follows that if partner, in this way, shows you his best suit he invites you to lead that suit, and you should, in almost every instance, lead him the best card you have of the suit as a strengthening card. If, however, you are obviously longer in the suit than he is, you may lead your fourth-best, that your suit may not be blocked. This is about the only exception to leading your best card to partner's pronounced suit.

If partner has shown his weakest suit you will, of course, not lead from this suit, unless you are forced to do so. When partner has shown his weakest suit by discard, you may have to make a choice between *two* suits, but generally the play—especially the discards of the opponents, if any,—will direct you to the suit that he is more likely to have strength in. When you lead a suit that you judge through negative inference, is your partner's strongest suit, lead the highest of any three cards; if you have more than three, usually open the suit conventionally. When partner has absolute command of a suit, he may discard the master card of the suit, and you can lead the suit with the assurance that he can take care of it unassisted. If partner discards the king or any card the second-best in play, he has no more of the suit, and this information may be of great advantage to your game. If your adversaries have been put to the discard, and your partner has not, their discards point to their suits, and the suit marked as their weakest is obviously your partner's best, and in this way you are frequently directed to his suit. Again your partner's suit may be proclaimed in a negative way by your opponents opening their suits—if C opens clubs, D spades; you holding strength in hearts, partner (B) must have strength in diamonds, if in anything. Second:

Leading to Adversaries' Discard.

The second mode of leading to the discard, is to lead the suit in which your right-hand opponent has shown weakness—that is, you lead up to announced weakness. You must do this, sometimes, as the best thing available, and you should do this in preference to a haphazard lead, especially if you care to have the lead with your left-hand adversary.

Third: You will often find that your best resource is to lead through the strong hand (declared by discard), of your left-hand opponent. His suit may be but moderately strong, and if you can lead from a sequence of two or three cards like kn, 10, or 10, 9, 8, it may force him to give up command, if he attempts to take the trick. In the event of having nothing better at command you will lead either *through* proclaimed strength, or *up to* published weakness. Of course, if you, as A, can lead a suit C has shown as his best, and D has marked as his weakest suit, your advantage is twofold. You are leading through strength up to *sure* weakness, and if C does not attempt to take, your partner B can finesse against the proclaimed weakness of D.

It will be seen that it is very important to note the discards of your adversaries as well as of your partner, and also the manner of discarding. For instance: C is leading trumps and D discards a spade, do not at once dismiss this, and jump at the conclusion that D's weakest suit is spades—it may be his best,—for D may echo great strength in this suit by the order of his discards. (*See* "The Suit Echo.") Every card discarded, no difference by whom, should be carefully noted and the inference drawn. Suppose your opponents have discarded two hearts, you hold five, partner shows four—the suit can go but once at best. This is simplicity itself, but if you do not note and mentally record the discards, you cannot know even the most simple, yet at the same time very important things, and consequently you will make the most egregious blunders. You cannot escape making very stupid plays, unless you equip yourself with all the inferences elicited by the play.

If you lead the 3, C puts on the 4; your partner kn; and D takes with k, you must make a note of the fact

that D does not hold the qu, and this inference must not be dismissed until the qu is played. No card can fall that does not publish some information; it may be of little importance, or again of the greatest value. The best players fail to catch all the cards have to say, the best are those who miss the fewest words. You must be extraordinarily attentive to the cards to play the best whist, no matter how clever you may be.

CHAPTER XVII.

FORCING.

When to force and when not to force your partner is a vexed question with the authorities. At best the forcing game is a poor one. It is a cheap way of making tricks. There are comparatively few hands where the best play—the play which will make the most tricks—renders it necessary to deliberately force your partner. Playing for a ruff or cross-ruff is cheap whist, and very often results in loss, even when the ruff is established. There is nearly always a better line of play possible. When in the judgment of a fine player a force is the *only* way to make all the tricks possible—the force will be offered, and if partner has reasons for thinking otherwise, he will not take it, and will show by discard his object in not taking it. The best players always consider the best way the handsome way of gaining the same number of tricks. If there are two ways of making the same number of tricks, the fine player will select the more brilliant way.

You cannot lay down unvarying rules applicable to the finer points of whist. There are thousands of fine points—the delicate touches—that the books may never reach; the really splendid things you must learn from practice with fine players.

Forcing Partner.

Some general rules, with comments, which apply to forcing partner, follow :—

1. Do not force your partner when you are weak in trumps.

This is a good general rule and should rarely be violated. It applies, of course, to the early part of the hand, before there has been any declaration of strength or weakness. The object in not forcing your partner when you are weak in trumps is obvious; you weaken him, and strengthen the opponents. For instance, if you force your partner, you holding but two trumps, and your partner takes the force holding four, this at once leaves one of the adversaries with the long trump. No play is more likely to ruin your partner's hand than to force him when you are weak in trumps. For the sake of the instant trick, made by the force, you may render comparatively worthless a good hand, and at once place yourself and your partner at the mercy of the adversaries. You capture the one cheap trick at too great a risk. It may be said, "Give partner the opportunity to make a little trump, he may be weak; if so, he gladly takes the force; if he is but moderately strong let him refuse, if he deems it best." But the objection to this is that it conflicts with the generally recognized convention of the game—viz., that you *do not* force your partner when you are weak yourself in trumps. The order for play is informatory; for if you do intentionally force your partner, he reads at once that you have sufficient strength to take care of the adversaries in the trump suit. and he willingly takes the force, and, as a rule, is justified in at once leading you his best trump, as in answer to the call, for

by your forcing him you have virtually made a trump request. If, on the other hand, you refrain from forcing him, when the opportunity to do so is evident, you negatively inform him of your weakness in trumps. The information in either case is valuable. The negative information imparted by conventional play is often as absolute as the positive. But here, if you do not generally respect the conventional order—offering partner the force whether strong or weak in trumps, you perplex him, and he may take when it will ruin his game, and pass when it will ruin yours.

2. You may force partner when you are strong in trumps.

You must use discretion in the application of this rule. It may be well for you to force partner having great or fair strength in trumps, and again it may not be the best play. The rule holds good in most cases, but there may come a hand in which there is a better way. It is often better play to give partner a strengthening card in the suit that he has shown to be his. If you force him, there is some risk attending upon it. He may have no trump, or be overtrumped; besides you must bear in mind that if partner does succeed in getting in his trump, that he must then lead something, and you should carefully consider what this lead is most likely to be, and its effect upon the play of the combined hands. The point is that you must not jump at the opportunity to force partner simply because the chance is offered, even if you do have strength in trumps; first consider all the different phases of the situation, before you do so. The strength in trumps to justify you in forcing partner early in the play of the hand, should usually be such that you feel reasonably sure of being able to resist any attempt the opponents may make to exhaust them.

3. You may force partner, though weak in trumps, when he has shown a desire to be forced.

Partner may inform you in a number of ways that he does not object to being forced. For example: (1) He trumps a doubtful card; (2) he has the opportunity of forcing you and does not; (3) he returns to you the last card he has of your suit in preference to opening his own suit; (4) returns the opponents' lead when it is evidently not for the purpose of leading through the strong up to the weak hand; (5) refuses to lead trumps, although he has a great suit of his own, or knows that you have an established suit;—all these indicate that he does not object to being forced, and some of them are equivalent to asking you to force him, if you think best. If partner trumps a winning card of the opponents, you must not take it for granted that he is weak in trumps and therefore force him. If you have nothing better, you may offer him the chance, but the fact that he trumped a sure winning card does not necessarily imply that he desires to be forced.

4. When a see-saw is evident.

Usually when the opportunity for a double ruff presents itself it should be taken advantage of, but, even in this case, care should be taken. You should consider how long the ruff is likely to live. If the ruff is brought about by you having one great suit, partner another, you should weigh well the chances of your ability to draw the trumps, for you may sacrifice the opportunity for a splendid game by thoughtlessly snapping at a few tricks, when by a higher order of play you may do much better. Few players have the strength to resist the temptation to indulge in a see-saw, as the alternate trumping of partners has the appearance of making tricks as ecomically as possible; and this, in fact, is true, when each of

the partners is weak in trumps—say each three only, but if one of the partners has four fair trumps, and a great suit besides, the see-saw may cost several tricks.

5. When great strength in trumps is declared against you.

The mere fact that one of the adversaries has called, is not alone a sufficient ground for you to force partner, particularly if you are *very* weak in trumps. The fact of your being very weak would indicate that your partner is just so much the more likely to be fairly strong. Usually, however, it is best to offer partner the opportunity, and he will exercise his own judgment about taking the force. He will feel at liberty to refuse, knowing that you have forced him, owing to the fact that the adversary has asked for trumps. If he does not take the force, his discard will most likely afford you valuable information, and it will, at least, apprise you of the fact that he is strong enough in trumps to justify him in hoping to be able to resist the adversaries in their effort to exhaust them, and you must then play, if possible, to prevent his being forced, and in every way protect and strengthen him. If one of the opponents calls, and the other echoes strength, it is then evident that your partner can make no defense in the suit, and you may, usually, unhesitatingly force him. So also if the opponents in leading trumps show such strength that you know your partner's trumps must fall, you will, of course, play for a ruff.

6. You may force your partner when you need but a single trick to make or save the game.

It may happen that the opportunity to force partner presents itself when you need but a single trick to make or save a game, and if there is a possibility of your not being able to make the trick in any other way, you will,

of course, offer him the chance of making it by the force.

7. Force partner when, in your judgment, the situation is a justification for doing so.

This rule embraces the other six, and carries us back to the starting-point. It emphasizes the fact that when to force and when not to force the partner must, in a great measure, be left to the judgment of the player. So much depends upon the character of your hand, the situation, the score, the stage of the play and the inferences drawn from the fall of the cards, that no set rules will meet the exigencies of the case.

The foregoing instructions, in reference to forcing partner, apply with greater force to the early stages of the hand. When the hand is developed, the player of good whist perception will not miss the opportunity to force partner, if it is the best play the situation affords. In exceptional situations you may find it expedient to force partner, even when you do not have a trump, and again you may abstain from forcing him, although you have five or six. The general rules given are as good as may be devised, and the student, especially, should adhere to them, as he will nearly always be right. The advanced player will follow them in the absence of any information afforded by the play to warrant him in departing from them; but he knows when to depart from the rules, as he also knows that all rules and maxims stand second to the fall of the cards. No rule should be allowed to get the better of your judgment. For example: "Do not force partner if you are weak in trumps," is a good general rule, and particularly forcible in the first few rounds of the hand, but do not let even this rule run away with your judgment, for sometimes it is very good play to lead the suit partner is out of—

giving him the option of taking the force, especially if you think that you must lose the trick in this suit in any event, for then, if partner refuses to take the force, no harm is done.

Forced by the Adversary.

When you are forced by the opponent, or unintentionally forced by partner, your proper play is a matter of great concern, and good judgment must be exercised. When you are forced, intentionally or otherwise, by your opponent, second hand, your position is one worthy of due deliberation.

It is often right to refuse to take the force or overtrump the adversary, when it occurs early in the hand, and you have just four trumps and a fair hand besides. When you do refuse, partner will read your hand as above, and will lead you a trump at the first opportunity, as you can make no more positive request for trumps than this. If you trump in a situation like the one just cited, you very materially prejudice your chances of a great game for the single trick. You must be careful, however, not to carry this refusal to excess. You must not, as a rule, refuse to be forced by a sure winning card, except in situations similar to the one referred to, and not then, if the winning card is sure to be followed by others of the same suit to which partner must evidently follow. Without more than four trumps you will do best, as a rule, to take the force and lead trumps. With less than four, generally trump.

Forced by Partner.

When forced by partner you should not refuse unless you have most excellent reasons. A good partner will

not purposely force you early in the hand—as a rule—unless he is strong enough in trumps to desire them led, and if you cannot see your way very clearly, take the force and play his game, for the chances are that partner desires that you should make a little trump before he proceeds to disarm the adversaries.

Forcing the Adversary.

If it is a disadvantage to force your partner when you are weak in trumps, or to be forced by the opponent when you are but moderately strong in them, it follows that it is evidently an advantage to you to force the adversaries when they are strong. If it is good play to force the partner when he is weak in trumps, it is very poor play to force an opponent when he is not strong. You would, by such play, be playing into his hand. You must particularly avoid leading a card that will give the opponent, who is strong, a discard, and the one who is weak the opportunity to trump; nothing could be worse than this, and it should be done only in rare cases, where you must throw the lead at all hazards. If you are forcing the adversary, who is strong, and he refuses to take the force, force him again. There is a neat point often missed here, and with it a trick or two; suppose you open the hand with queen, holding ace, k, qu and two others, second hand follows, but to your second lead of the ace he renounces—refusing the force—discarding a tolerably high card of another suit, you may be sure that he has but one or, at the most, two more cards of the suit he has discarded from. Now, if you hold ace, or ace, king of this suit—lead them before you go on with a third round of your other suit; for if you do not, your opponent will most likely clear his hand of the suit, and

your high cards may not make. This you would do more particularly if your hand was so weak in trumps that you could not offer much defense, or if the game was critical, and the one trick might save it.

When you are weak in trumps it is fair to assume that your opponents have some strength in them; and in such cases do not hesitate to force the opponent, who *early* in the play of the hand shows that he is void of your suit. It will nearly always turn out that you force the strong hand.

CHAPTER XVIII.

LEADING THE ADVERSARIES' SUIT.

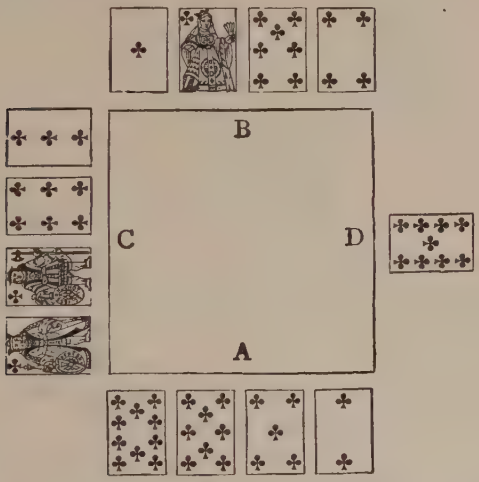
Sometimes you will find it good play to lead the adversaries' strong suit, the suit they have established, even when you know that partner must follow in it. This may be done for the purpose of throwing the lead or drawing the last card of the suit from one of the opponents. If you can draw the last card D has of C's great suit, and then put D in the lead after trumps are out, you may compel him to lead your suit, or your partner's, and if C has no re-entry card he will not make his great suit. If the position is well-judged you cannot lose by the play, for the losing cards you hold of the adversaries' suit must lose in any event, and you make them lose in a way that will result in your ultimate gain. Suppose C leads a spade, showing great strength and length in the suit, and then leads trumps to protect the suit, A wins the first round of trumps. Now, if A holds a losing spade, and the fall indicates that D has most likely but one more spade, A may lead it. If C is forced to take it, and draw D's last spade, the play may be very advantageous to A. If D is finally left with the lead, he has no spade to lead to C, and if C has no card of re-entry he will not make his great suit. A's play in such a situation might save several tricks. This play in the above case would be particularly effective if A held a tenace in trumps, for, by the play, A throws the lead with C; if C abandons trumps and goes on with spades A

trumps. If C opens a fresh suit then A is last player, and in any event A has lessened C's chances of making his great suit. The opportunity for making this good play may rarely occur, but you should be on the alert for such neat points. You must recollect that ordinary routine play will nearly always take all the tricks but *one* that can by any play be taken. The finest players by the finest play only occasionally gain an extra trick—the rest are made by any play. You must also remember that in nearly every hand it early develops that you have cards that *must* lose, no matter how you play or plan, and the clever thing to do is to make them lose somewhat to your advantage—lose as *you* would have them lose, not as the opponents wish them to. You can often foil the cleverest adversary, by the use you make of your *losing* cards—by making them lose at the proper moment and in the right way. There is this *value* to *losing* cards that the moderate player knows not of. A game may be saved simply because you have a *losing* card to use at the critical moment—thus, by strategic manœuvring, clothing weakness with strength.

CHAPTER XIX.

LEADING THROUGH THE STRONG HAND.

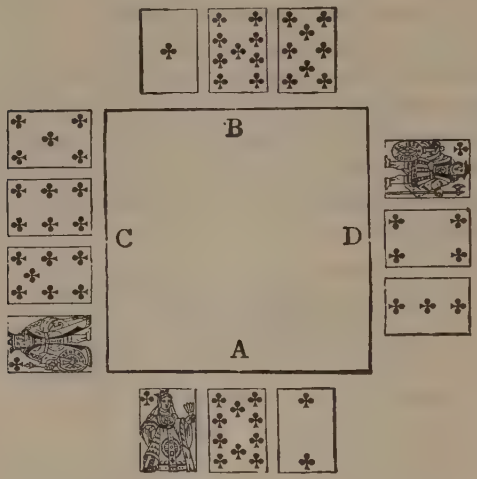
It sometimes happens that you have no suit that you can open to advantage, but you are in a position to return *through* the leader his suit, up to the right-hand adversary who is *weak* in the suit. It is often good play to avail yourself of this, even though you have a good hand. Suppose this case:—



1.—C leads 3 (trumps); B plays 4; D plays 9; A plays 10.

A knows that C has but four trumps, and that D has put up his best card. If A returns the 8 through C, he

places him at a disadvantage, for, if he passes, B also passes, if he covers, B covers in turn and does *not return the suit*, and when A gets in again, he again leads through him, and there is not a trick in the suit for C. Again:—



C is the original leader of the hand, and—

1.—C leads 5 (plain suit); B plays 8; D plays kn; A plays qu.

Now, suppose you, playing A's hand, hold four small trumps; ace, qu, and one small, king and two small, in the other suits. If you open any suit, you do so to your probable disadvantage. Knowing that D has most likely put up his best card, and that C does not hold both ace and king, or he would have led one or the other, you return your 10 through C, and he must give up control of the suit if he attempts to take it. If C passes your 10, so will partner. No harm is done if it turns out that

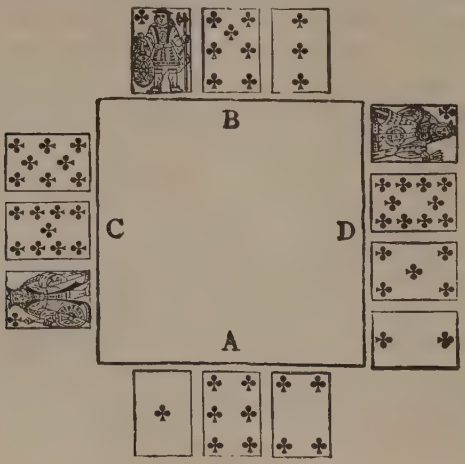
C has ace, partner king; for if C puts up ace, he loses control of the suit, and, what is better still, he must then open up a suit to your manifest advantage. Care must be taken that your right-hand adversary has more of the suit. If it is highly probable that he has not, you must not take this chance, but with such a hand as described above, lead trumps.

In returning through the strong hand you must be on the alert for this adverse play—viz., the strong hand may hold the master card—the balance of power in the suit with you and partner, and if the original leader suspects that his partner has but *one* more of the suit, he plays his master card, and at once returns the suit for his partner to ruff, and your suit is cut to pieces, and your good cards in the suit sacrificed to the *weak* trump hand of the opponent. You can generally counter on this by first exacting a round or two of trumps, and then lead through the original leader. You can nearly always detect this phase of the situation, by the card led and the follow, in conjunction with the cards you hold in the suit. You must not confuse the play of leading through the strong hand, with the return of the adversaries' suit for the object of ruffing. Good players rarely return the opponent's suit with this object in view; if they do the motive is apparent from the fall of the cards. It is very often bright play, and the best the situation affords, to lead through the calling hand, for, if the calling hand does not attempt to take the trick, partner will read the play, and finesse deeply, and if it wins, he will not return the suit. In rare cases you are forced from sheer weakness to return the adversaries' suit solely for the purpose of placing the lead with your right-hand opponent, that your partner may become last player to the next trick—but this is a last resort.

CHAPTER XX.

THROWING THE LEAD.

THERE is nothing prettier, brighter or more effective than throwing the lead. This strategy may be resorted to at any stage of the hand, but the occasion for it is more frequent in the ending. When you hold a hand exceptionally weak you may often benefit your partner by putting your right-hand opponent into the lead. In this way you compel your adversary to lead through the weak hand—your hand—up to the hand of your partner, who by this acquires the advantage of position, and through this manœuvre may make a tenace which otherwise he would have lost had you opened one of your weak suits. In such cases you will, therefore, in the absence of anything better, select a card that will put your right-hand opponent in the lead. As an illustration of this, suppose the following:—



D opens the hand with a plain suit lead:—

1.—D leads 2; A plays 4; C plays k; B plays 3.

2.—C leads 9; B plays 7; D plays 5; A plays ace.

D's finesse was obligatory.

Suppose that A has four very small trumps, and three each of the other two suits, also very weak; his position is critical. If he opens trumps he implies strength; if either of the three-card suits he may deceive partner and weaken him and strengthen the adversaries. D has shown weakness by announcing a suit headed by queen as his best suit; yet he may hold in the plain suit—A would select at random—the major tenace, in which B may hold king, knave, and in this event A would be playing the opponent's game. A's best play under the circumstances is to throw the lead into D's hand, by leading the 6 of the suit D has opened, and in this way place the responsibility of the lead with D. The play will not deceive B, for in this instance he will read the situation and know that A has not returned D's suit for the purpose of forcing him, for he (B) is marked with either qu, kn or 10, as D cannot have all three.

You may sometimes find it to your advantage to throw the lead at the very start, owing to the peculiar character of your hand or the trump turned. Say you pick up ace, queen and two small trumps; king and two small; 10 and two small, and king, knave, ten in the other suit—king turned to your right. Now, you lead trumps to disadvantage; and you have no suit to make —lead the 10 from the k, kn, 10, and throw the lead; if partner takes the trick and has a good suit, he will show it, and then will lead a strengthening trump through the king turned. If the opponents win the trick, they must open up to either your hand or that of partner's, and you may ask for trumps or not as you prefer.

The lead is of great advantage when you can control the play, but again it may be a great disadvantage. When to have the lead is likely to be to your detriment, you can frequently throw it to good results, and this strategic point should not be overlooked. The trick you give the opponents to throw the lead is one that you must in all likelihood lose in any event, and you, in this way, lose it in the most advantageous manner.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHANGING SUITS.

THE rule reads "Avoid changing suits." This maxim should not be departed from unless the character of your hand or the fall of the cards justify it. There is, perhaps, nothing so productive of loss as injudiciously changing suits.

Exceptions to Returning Partner's Suit.

1.—When you have a very strong suit of your own.

As with ace, k, qu and others you will not, as a rule, return partner's suit, but open your own. By doing this, you not only show partner your suit, but at once make winning cards that, if withheld, may not make later in the play.

2.—When you have a suit that is evidently stronger than partner's.

You may open it in preference to returning partner's suit, as you consider that there is a greater probability of establishing your suit than the one partner has opened.

3.—When you win the first round of partner's suit cheaply.

If you win the first round with a card like the 10 or 9, not having finessed, it is usually disadvantageous to return it, as the strength in the suit, against partner, is with your right-hand adversary.

4.—When it is evident that one of the opponents is void of the suit.

This is sometimes a justification for changing suits; but if you are weak in trumps it is generally better to continue the suit than to open your own moderately strong suit. If the suit is ruffed, it will usually force the strong hand. (*See* p. 386.)

5.—When the fall indicates that both of the adversaries are void of the suit.

If you continue the suit, the opponent who is weak will trump, and the other discard, and nothing could be worse.

It is usually better play to return partner's suit, especially if you can lead him a strengthening card, than to open your own suit, even though it is a fairly strong one—say ace, k and two small. If you open this suit—leading k, then ace, you give up control, and may establish it for the adversaries; besides parting with what might prove to be valuable cards of re-entry.

If you open the hand originally, the first trick going to the opponents, and afterwards you get in, you should, as a rule, go on with your suit, with the view of establishing it. It is usually very poor play to attempt to establish *two* suits. When you open a suit, you make your adversary last player, and this may sacrifice a card for partner that would have made had the suit been opened up to him. Herein lies the danger in opening a weak suit with a small card. You may discontinue your suit when partner can give you no assistance, and you are not strong enough to establish it unaided. Reasons similar to those pointed out in paragraphs 4 and 5—which justify partner in not returning your suit—also apply here, and may justify you in discontinuing your suit, even though you must change to a weak suit—leading the highest of three if necessary. It is sometimes best not to return partner's suit nor continue your own, when you can lead *up* to weakness or *through moderate* strength. Strength in trumps may modify your game. You should play your partner's game when weak in trumps.

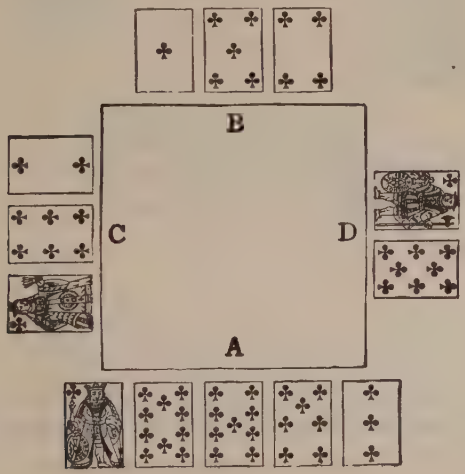
With a strong trump hand play your own game.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE RETURN.

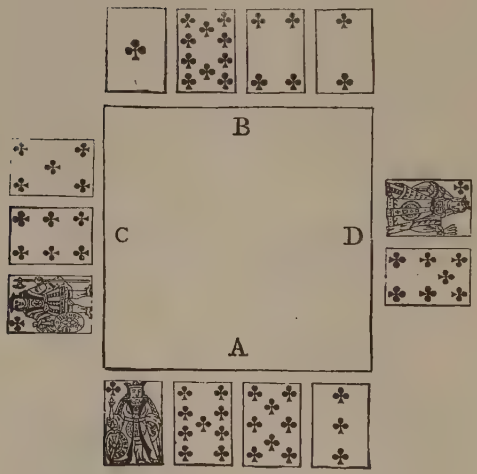
THE proper return of partner's suit is a very important thing. When you hold the master card of the suit it should generally be played, if you return the suit, irrespective of the number you hold of the suit at the time. Holding two cards of the suit at the time you return the suit, lead the higher of the two. Holding three or more, return the lowest. There is an exception to this rule, and a very important one—when you retain the lowest card the first round (having exactly four) you then return the highest, even though you hold three cards of the suit at the time. (*See* "Unblocking.") Holding second and third best, return the second-best. A few examples on the return will make these rules clear, and the reasons for them evident.

Return the Higher of Two Cards.



1.—A leads 7; C plays 2; B plays ace; D plays 8.
2.—B leads 5; D plays kn; A plays k; C plays 6.
Here B returns the higher of two cards and is now marked with the 4 and no more. Again:—

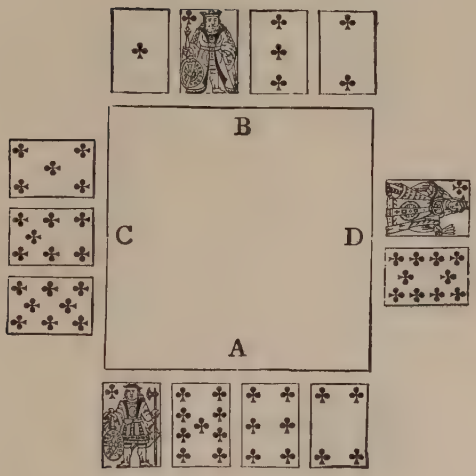
Return the Lowest of Three Cards,



1.—A leads 3; C plays 5; B plays ace; D plays 7.
2.—B leads 2; D plays qu; A plays k; C plays 6.
B having three cards, and not the master card, returns

the lowest card, and, the 4 not falling, A knows that B has the 4 and at least one more. Or this:

Return of the Master Card.



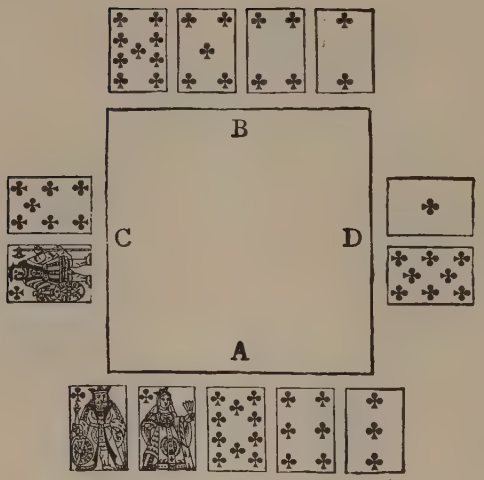
1.—A leads 4; C plays 5; B plays k; D plays 10.

2.—B leads ace; D plays qu; A plays 6; C plays 7.

Here B holds three cards, four originally, but the ace being a master card he returns it. B does this irrespective of number. The card, of course, need not be the

ace, but any master card—that is the best card of the suit in play. Again:—

Returning the Highest of Three Cards.



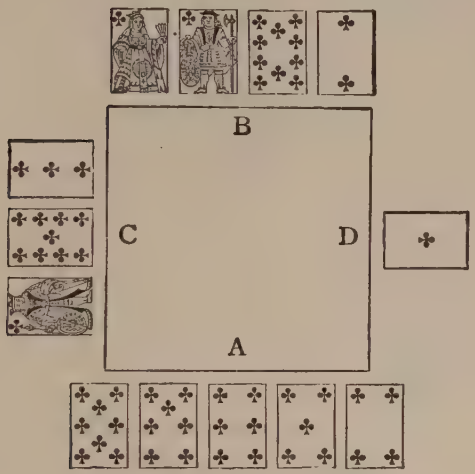
A leads qu; C plays 7; B plays 4; D plays ace.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays 8; A plays k; C plays kn.

Here B held exactly four cards of the suit, hence played his third-best card to the first trick (*see* "Un-

blocking "). B now returns his highest card although he holds three cards at the time.

Return of the Second-Best.



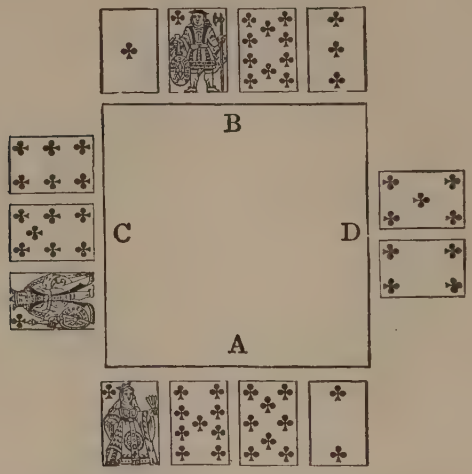
1.—A leads 5; C plays 3; B plays 10; D plays ace.

2 (B to lead).—B leads qu; D renounces; A plays 4; C plays k.

Here B, holding second and third best, returns the second-best. If he returns the deuce—the lowest of three—he loses a trick, as C wins the trick with the 9. If trumps come out and A leads the suit, B plays kn and returns the 2. If B leads the suit he leads the kn, and A's five-card suit is cleared.

Following Up a Finesse.

It is often best to return the master card of your partner's suit at once; but when you win the first round by a finesse, it is best as a rule to wait for partner to again lead the suit, that the advantage of your finesse may be followed up. If B makes a successful finesse it is incumbent upon A to make the most of it. As:—



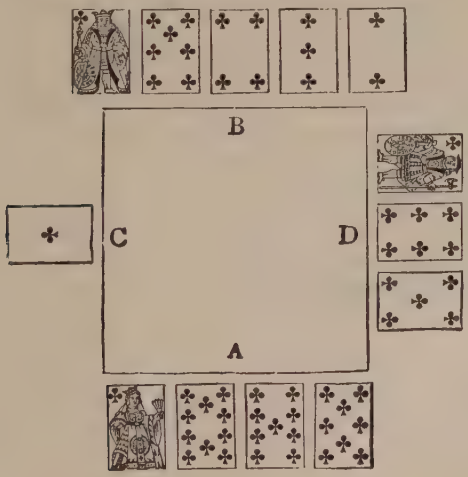
1.—A leads 2; C plays 6; B plays 10; D plays 4.

Here B would throw away all the advantage of the finesse gained by returning the suit. A must follow up this advantage, gained by B, by again leading the suit through C, and the k is hemmed in; if B returns the suit the k is freed. It is evident here to A that they can take every trick in the suit, and if he has any strength at all in the other suits and even fair trumps, he should lead trumps for the protection of this suit, when he gets

in the lead again. Even *one* more round in this suit would be dangerous, for D must be short of the suit. If A should lead trumps here B would be justified in deep finesse, for he would read A's play as an effort at protecting this suit, and he would not put up his best card. It makes all the difference in the world to B whether A has played trumps from strength, or whether he has led to protect a great suit proclaimed in their combined hands. The return of the trump suit is fully explained in the chapter on "The Echo."

When it is evident to B that he is longer in the suit than A, he should not return the master card, if he knows the *second*-best card is with A. If he does, A may block B in the suit, to the loss of a trick or more. This is a point careless players miss. A should not finesse on such a return, but play his best and return the next best —getting out of B's way. Suppose the following:—

Refusal to Return the Master Card.



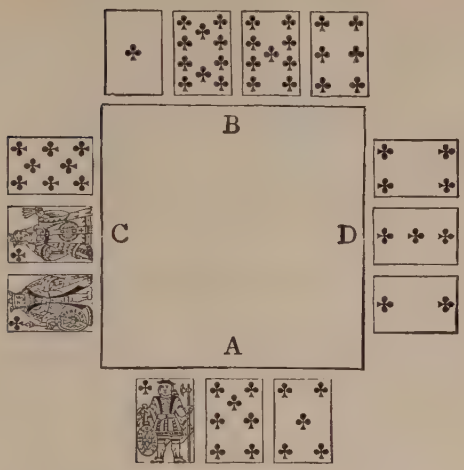
1.—A leads 8; C plays ace; B plays 2; D plays 5.

Now suppose that trumps come out and B gets in, he should lead the 3 and not the k. If B parts with the k his suit is irrevocably blocked.

Departing from Rule.

Late in the hand you may sometimes find it best to depart from rule, and return the lower of two cards, in order that you may not tempt partner to finesse. You desire his best played, that he may gain the lead, to lead you a winning card you know he holds, that you may profit by a discard. This is on the same principle that late in hand you will sometimes lead the low card from qu or kn and one small, not wishing partner to finesse. For example: Partner has the best s; you the best h, and the last c—trump; you also have qu and one small d—the ace and k yet in play. You lead the small d and not the qu in the hope that partner may win the trick—playing his ace d, then his winning s—giving you the needed discard of a diamond. If you lead the qu partner might finesse holding the ace, and a trick be lost.

The rules governing the return of partner's suit, like all other whist rules and maxims, do not take into consideration the exceptional situations. Positions arise in which you must depart from the conventional order for play. Here is an instance:—



This is the trump suit.

1.—A leads kn; C plays qu; B plays ace; D plays 2.

2.—B leads 9; D plays 3; A plays 5; C plays k.

B would lose a trick if he returned the lowest of three. He cannot afford to risk C having the k, 8. The fall shows that C has most likely the king, and that A has led the highest of three—possibly only two. The 9 forces the k and the 8 will not make. The return is irregular owing to the fall. B returns the middle card, for if he returns the 10 he will leave partner in the dark as to the location of the six, as—

2.—B leads 10; D plays 3; A plays 5; C plays k.

3 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays 4; A plays 7; C plays 8.

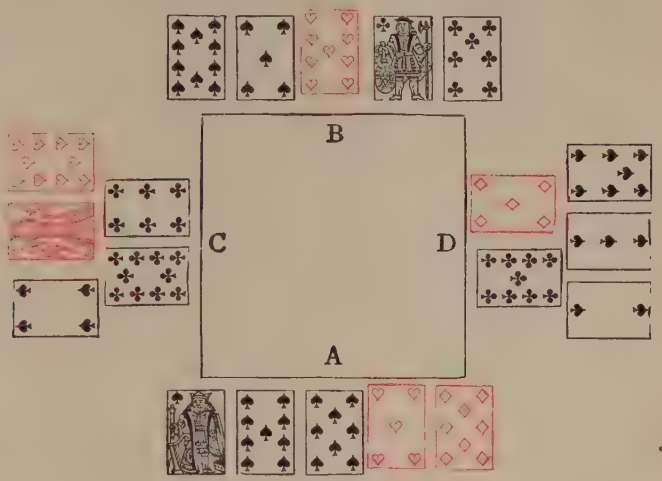
A must now give D the 6, as B has only shown three trumps by the play. If he returns the 9, and afterwards plays the 10, A reads the play and gives B the 6.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE TWELFTH.

MANY fair whist players are sadly remiss in handling Eleventh, Twelfth and Thirteenth cards. The opportunity to make the best use of these cards occurs in almost every hand. When and how to use them is a question worth the student's careful consideration. The one trick to be played for may be made or lost by the proper or improper play of one of these cards. The twelfth card may be either a master or a losing card of any two cards of a suit in play. When it is the winning twelfth, and the losing thirteenth is with your right-hand opponent, it is useful in giving your partner a discard or the opportunity to overtrump; if a losing twelfth, in placing the lead. You should be careful how you handle your winning twelfth card, so long as trumps are yet in. Suppose A has a twelfth card, D the losing thirteenth; C and B each with trumps, B probably the best ones; A, here, must be careful how he makes use of his twelfth card, if he has other *winning* cards in his hand. C may not trump A's twelfth, but instead throw a losing card—the only one he has—of the suit in which both A and B have master cards, and a trick or more be lost. A few illustrations will make the value of twelfth cards apparent.

The Winning Twelfth.



Clubs trump; two rounds have been played; C and B each marked with two; B the probable tenace over C, who is marked with the best hearts. One round of spades, to which the ace, qu, kn, 6 fell. A has the twelfth d and D is marked with the losing thirteenth. A is in, and if he leads the twelfth card *before* he leads a round of spades, he loses *two* tricks—

1.—A leads 8 d; C plays 4 s; B plays 9 h; D plays 5 d.

C very properly refuses to trump. If he trumps with the 6 he is overtrumped, has his last trump drawn and he will not take a trick. If he trumps with the 10, he makes the 9 good for D, but even this loses. The correct play is to throw the losing spade. There is a good lesson here for both A and C; A plays badly by the lead of the twelfth card at the wrong time, and C takes full advantage of it.

2.—A leads k s; C plays 6 c; B plays 5 s; D plays 2 s.

3.—C leads k h; B plays 7 c; D overtrumps; A plays 5 h.

B trumps with the 7, hoping to find the heart with D; the result is the same, however, if he trumps with kn.

4.—D leads 3 s; A plays 8 s; C trumps; B plays 10 s.

The kn c makes, and A B score but two tricks out of the five. On the other hand, let A play as under—

1.—A leads k s; C plays 4 s; B plays 10 s; D plays 2 s.

B's play of the 10 s is a beautiful one for the chance of every trick, for if C injudiciously trumps, the twelfth d next led by A, with the 6, B would block A's spades, and must in this event lose the 9 h to C.

2.—A leads 8 d; C plays 10 h; B plays 5 s; D plays 5 d.

C discreetly throws the h, refusing to trump. B makes another fine play by discarding the 5 s. If he throws the *losing* heart he loses a trick.

3.—A leads 8 s; C plays 10 c; B overtrumps; D plays 3 s.

C trumps at the proper moment and with the right card, for trumping with the 10 c forces B to make a pretty play or lose a trick.

4.—B leads 7 c; D plays 9 c; A plays 5 h; D plays 6 c.

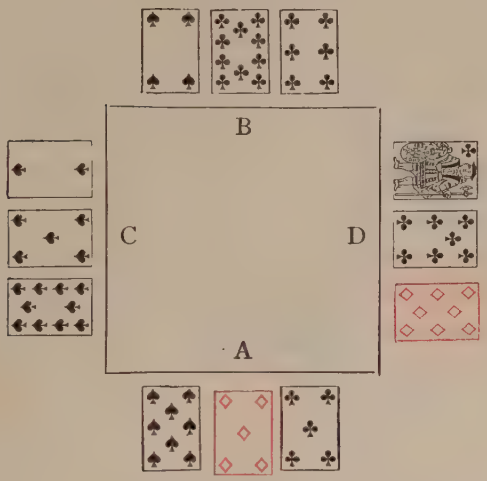
This illustrates the beauty of whist play where all the players are of equal skill and adroitness. If B attempts to make his little trump, he loses a trick; he is equal to C's fine second-hand play, however, and neatly meets it by the lead of the losing trump—throwing the lead with D that he may lead the losing s to A's 9 s.

5.—D leads 7 s, and A makes the 9 s and A B score *four* of the five tricks.

The fine play of A, C and B is worth careful study

and analysis, as it illustrates three intricate points in whist strategy that require the most accurate treatment, viz., the lead of the twelfth, the discard, and the refusal to trump when you will be overtrumped. Here is a simple case showing the value of a losing twelfth card.

The Losing Twelfth.



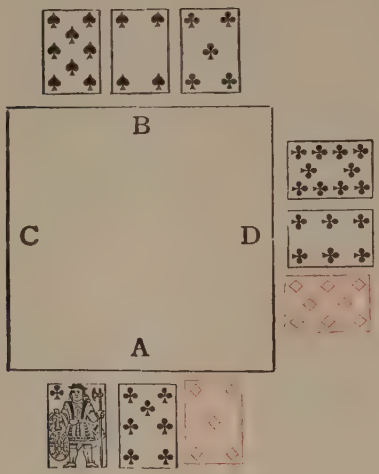
Hearts, trumps, are out; A is in the lead. If he leads either a spade or club, A B do not take a trick. But he can lead the losing twelfth and place the lead with D as—

1.—A leads 5 d; C plays 2 s; B plays 4 s; D plays 8 d.

2.—D must now lead a c to B's tenace and a trick is saved.

If the hands of A, B, D, are exchanged, the following position shows the value of a losing twelfth card

in another phase—for partner to trump for the benefit of leader's tenace, which may be either a plain suit or a trump one.



Clubs trumps. C's hand is immaterial.

1.—A leads 5 d; B trumps; D plays 8 d. B now leads through D's trump tenace and A B make all three tricks. Here A leads a twelfth for B to trump. If the twelfth is a master card in situations like this, B must also trump or lose a trick. The student will see by these illustrations that twelfth cards can be used to good purposes in various ways, and that if they are badly managed, a well-fought battle up to the point of using them, may end in defeat. It will also be noticed that the player must be

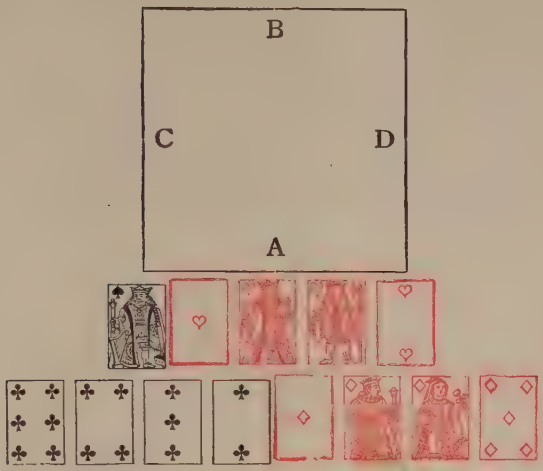
on the alert, when an opponent leads a twelfth card, to pick out the right path, as C did in the first example, or he may come to grief.

Examples could be multiplied illustrating the play and value of twelfth cards, but a careful study of these will serve. Even greater care must be taken when the thirteenth, either a master or a losing card, is with your left-hand opponent.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE THIRTEENTH.

THE last card of a suit in play is called a thirteenth, and good players make this card very effective at times, especially late in play. When left with the long trump and a thirteenth of a plain suit, your plain suit card is, of course, as valuable as your trump. This may be said of all the cards of an established suit—they are virtually so many thirteenth cards, and are of great value in connection with the balance of power in trumps. Thirteenth cards are rarely played early in the hand, they are reserved for use in the strategic manœuvres of the after play, and whenever led by a good player, the intent and purpose of the play should be most carefully studied. As before stated a thirteenth card is rarely led early in play, yet in exceptional cases they may be so used. Suppose the following case:—

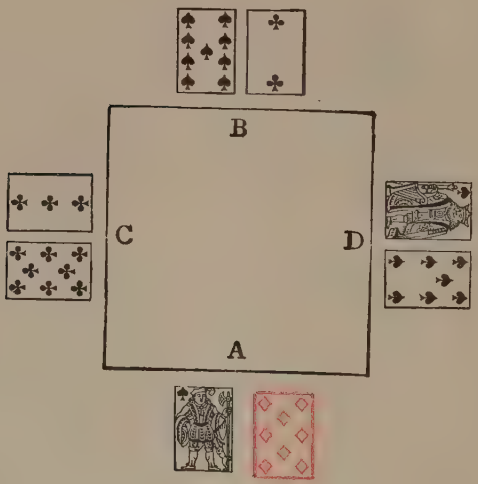


(Queen h turned with B.)

D opens the hand with a small spade; won by A with k, who then leads k d, the 2, 9 and 3 fall in the order named; A follows with qu d—the 4, 10 and 6 fall. A now reads that B is probably short of d and leads the ace, to which the 7, kn, 8 fall. A is now left with the thirteenth d; he has four tricks home and must score 3 by card to make the game. A has no suit to make, and reasons that if he now leads the last d, B's qu which is turned will win the trick, and if he can make the 2 h, by trumping the s, or his partner takes a trick in clubs, the game is made. A, therefore, leads the thirteenth d; C, with three small trumps, qu, kn of spades and kn to ace in clubs, throws ace of clubs; B wins with qu—his only trump, and holding five clubs headed by the 10, and the 10 and two other spades—returns a spade; A trumps with the deuce—and the game is won. As the cards

happened to lie, no other play, by A, would have given them 3 by cards and game.

When a thirteenth card is led late in the play of a hand, the leader has one of these four objects in view: First—For the best trump partner holds. Second—To place the lead. Third—To force the adversary. Fourth —To put the adversary to the discard. For example:



(Spades Trumps.)

A knows that D has k and another spade; B the 9 or 7 s. A leads the thirteenth diamond, and it demands of B his 9 s that it may force the play of the k from D, thus making A's kn s good. If B does not trump this thirteener a trick is lost.

A may lead a thirteenth to force the winning twelfth

trump from C or D, that B's losing twelfth may make. The last card of a suit may be led by A to force the long trump from D, and at the same time place the lead, that D may lead up to a tenace in A or B's hand. Again: A may lead a thirteener—trumps exhausted—to put C to the discard, that his own hand or that of B may be benefited. For further illustrations of the use of thirteenth cards, either in trumps or plain suits, *see* "Critical Endings."

CHAPTER XXV.

SPECIAL TOPICS.

Combination of Forces.

WHIST is pre-eminently a partnership game. The strength and beauty of modern whist is combination of forces. Each of the four players must plan for the play of twenty-six cards. Nothing can be worse than to play only for your own hand. Do not imagine that the cards *you* hold must win the tricks, in order to merit applause. A should not forget that the credit is his if he makes a card in B's hand that would be lost, except for his strategy. It matters not whose card takes the trick. Let it ever be first in your mind that you are playing the thirteen cards you hold in conjunction with an equal number in your partner's hand. A good whist player takes delight in planning for the play of his partner's hand, knowing that such play is a compliment to his skill. To be able to read your partner's hand, and play to make *his* cards, is whist of the highest order.

It is as essential in whist as in any business partnership that implicit confidence exist. Do not deceive your partner. "It is more important to inform your partner than to deceive your adversary," is a golden maxim. The evil effect of a deceit practiced upon your partner cannot be overestimated. Your credit has received a severe shock; he had confidence in your integrity, and relied upon your doing the right thing

always. Do not forget that when confidence is impaired, it is not easily restored. Guard your reputation for reliability and straightforwardness at the whist table with jealous care. The whist player who always plays a steady, careful, conservative game—strong hands and weak hands with equal interest—and, above all, never deceives you with erratic plays, planned mostly for his own hand, is the safe player. He is the Whist Player.

Mannerisms

You should studiously avoid all mannerisms in play, and never permit yourself to draw any inferences from the antics of either your partner or your opponents, if they should be guilty of making them. Cultivate a uniform style of play. Play each card with equal deliberation. Do not draw the card until ready to play it. Emphasize no play. If a play is accompanied with unusual earnestness, you insinuate that your partner may not read your intent. If you, by look or gesture, endeavor to draw special attention to your play, you have not only cast an imputation upon the whist perception of your partner, but you have made an effort to take an unfair advantage of your opponents—you have made a sign, not a signal. If to partner's lead, you, after unusual hesitation, play knave, and it loses to queen, and you exhibit surprise or disappointment—you are trespassing upon the proprieties; you say to partner, in the most unmistakable manner: "I finessed, I have the ace."

When an unusual, or rather an unequal, distribution of a suit occurs, and the fact is brought out by the play, it does not merit any more notice than any other play, except that each of the four players should be particu-

larly alert to meet such exceptional disposition of the cards.

You cannot favorably impress gentlemen with your game by thumping the table upon the delivery of certain winning cards that you happen to hold. You add nothing to the score. The cards will win just as surely if thrown with quiet dignity. It is positively unfair to make any comments upon your hand before the play, and it is in wretched taste to complain about your weak hands at any time. If you are having weak hands, every one at the table knows it as well as you do, and it is not complimentary to your adversaries to be constantly intimating that it is your weak hands, and not their play, that is giving them the score.

Some players have the habit of giving partner a raking over at the end of every hand. This is something a well-balanced whist player never does. To discuss the play between deals for the purpose of mutual benefit, is a different matter, and the proper thing to do.

Never attempt to rush the play, nor show displeasure or impatience if your opponent deliberates. It is a silent compliment to your skill. Besides you cannot play whist in a hurry. It is a game that asks for careful and deliberate work. If you have not the time to play two games, play one.

Do not manifest exultation when winning, nor chagrin over defeat. A well-played hand merits compliment, and good players are never slow to bestow it upon adversaries as well as partner. Whist is an intellectual pastime, and you should see to it that no word or act of yours disturbs the harmony that should prevail. It is singular, yet nevertheless true, that many players do the most discourteous acts, and violate laws of social etiquette at the whist table, who would not be guilty of

such conduct elsewhere. Their lapses arise mainly from their absorption in the game, and the excitement it creates. But this is no excuse for rudeness. Those who play at whist should be jealous of their whist ethics.

Silence.

Discreet people prefer to do one thing at a time and do it well. The best whist players know that they cannot do anything but play whist while playing whist. They find that all their faculties are taxed to the utmost in reading what the cards have to say. The best whist and silence are inseparable. Silence is in harmony with the dignity and intellectual scope of the American Game of Long Whist, where all the cards are played, and the play is for mental recreation.

Value of Conventional Play.

The difference between conventional, scientific whist —full of strategy, brilliant coups, startling finesse and insidious underplay—and unconventional play, when the aces, kings and queen are thrown in the order named, is very great. The one is by far the finest game ever devised, the other perhaps the poorest. If four fine players were to play fifty or an hundred hands, and then hand them over to four players who play at whist without any regard to the conventions, the A B's in each case would make, no doubt, about the same number of tricks. The net result as far as the score is concerned would be the same. The preponderence in strength in cards would win in either case, but what a difference in the manner in which the tricks would be made ! The first would be a mental,

the latter a physical, exercise. But if the hands were transposed and played as at duplicate—the four against the four—the score would be overwhelmingly in favor of the scientific play.

Unscientific whist—whist where there is no co-operation, and each of the *four adversaries* strives for tricks—is as near no game as it is possible to imagine. But when four thoughtful, silent men play conventional whist, the rank of the cards is respected, and the first card thrown upon the table puts the four players into communication, and a delightful mental struggle ensues.

Reason versus Rule.

The strongest whist players have the greatest respect for the rules—the recognized conventionalities of the game. They know that the rules and maxims as laid down by the best authorities are based upon well-known truths, gleaned from verified analysis. They also know that they are formulated to meet the usual disposition of the cards, and that to follow them—in the absence of any information derived from the fall of the cards—will lead to the best results in the majority of cases.

The masters of the game are those who follow the rules when they should, and disregard them when common sense, or their whist judgment convinces them that they are at a point in play not provided for by any set rule. Rules are for the average cases, and apply with particular force in the first few rounds of the hand. Unusual situations brought out by the play, often demand unusual treatment. The necessity for extempore strategy occurs in almost every hand, and is so utterly different under the constantly changing conditions, that no instructions can be given to meet such play. It would

require a rule for every case, and any attempt in this direction would only confuse the student. A few examples will illustrate this :—

Suppose that B is weak in trumps, or the opponents known to be very strong in them ; A has the lead and holds, say, ace, k, qu, kn, and others of a suit; he knows that the conventional lead from the quart major is the kn, but it would be ill-judged play to lead the kn in this situation, for B might be void of the suit and thinking A led the card for him to trump—waste a trump upon it. A should depart from rule and lead from the ace down. Again : The opponents have a see-saw; you get in the lead and hold ace, k and two small trumps, you may find it much better to force three rounds of trumps by leading the k then ace, then small, than to lead small, although the conventional play.

Take this case: You hold ace, k and three small of a suit not yet in play, and the thirteenth trump; as an original lead, you would lead ace, but here, in the ending, if you lead your ace and king, the qu will make, if doubly guarded with the opponents; or if with partner you may draw it, and the kn or a smaller card make against you. But if you depart from rule, and lead fourth-best, partner may make the first round for you, even with the kn or 10.

Suppose, again, that A holds ace, king and three small of a suit—the usual play is the ace to show five, but if A can determine—in any particular case—that it will be of more advantage, or the safer play, to show B, by the lead of the king, that he has the ace, than to show the numerical strength of the suit, he should unhesitatingly lead the king. The value of this departure from rule can be illustrated in this way; A is to lead, B is ruffing, say spades, A leads king d from ace, k and three others,

then a spade for B to ruff, and B can now return the d with the assurance that A has the ace, and that A can surely take, to lead again a spade for B to ruff. Had A in this situation led ace, B would have been in doubt as to the location of king.

A may lead the ace from ace, 10, 8, 7, 3, and the fall may show him that if he follows with the 7, the fourth-best, second hand may have a sure finesse; if so A will, of course, next lead the 3, in the hope that C will not finesse, and thus clear his suit. This play should not deceive B, for he will be warned, most likely, by the fall to the ace, to expect A to so play.

Nearly all brilliant plays are departures from rule, and in the endings especially, the necessity for disregarding the rules is more frequent. You should never permit a rule to get the better of your judgment. Rules do not take into consideration the state of the score, the rank of the trump turned, nor the varying data obtained from the fall of the cards, as the hand advances. Take this simple case: "With ace, qu and three small—lead ace, then fourth-best"; but suppose to the ace partner drops the king, if you continue the suit it requires no order from the books to have you follow with qu. So in a vast variety of phases the necessity for departure from rule presents itself; some simple, others complex, and you must be equal to these occasions to play the best whist.

Do not run away with the idea, however, that you are to play contrary to rule capriciously. You must have the best of reasons, and the situation should be examined with great care before you depart from rule.

False Cards.

It is not in harmony with modern scientific whist to

play a false card under any circumstances, not even when it deceives the adversaries only. If you, second hand, holding qu, kn and one small, play the qu, and if on the return of the suit the leader finesses the 10, reading that you cannot have the kn, and your kn wins, and by this false play you gain a trick, you have a trick that by right does not belong to you. There is no strategy, no merit in the play. You have practiced a cheap deceit, and nothing more.

Suppose you pick up the following hand: s qu, 10, 8, 4; h 6, 5, 4, 3; c 10, 9, 6, 4; d 2—hearts trumps. You are the original leader of the hand. If you open with the diamond singleton, you have deceived the whole table, you have played falsely, and there is no justification for your play. You have no more right to play the qu second hand, holding the kn, than you have to open the hand with the singleton.

If the play of one false card is sanctioned, so may the play of two be, or you may play one card conventionally and the other not, and the integrity of the game is gone. If the right to play false cards, under any circumstances, is recognized, the language of the cards is confused, the conversation of the game and its intellectual status impaired.

The vast majority of American whist players play whist purely for the intellectual pleasure it affords—there is no other incentive. With such players the mere making of the tricks is a secondary object, and to either make or lose a trick through deception is equally unsatisfactory.

If the right to play false is recognized, there is then no limit to its pernicious and disintegrating practice. Besides, there is nothing to be gained by playing false cards. If A wins the first game by a cheap deception

practiced upon D, he (D) in turn is at liberty to win the second by similar chicane. The privilege to play false goes around the table, and in the end you have been deceived as often as you have deceived others. You may not hope to become more adept in the playing of false cards than your opponents, for such play is devoid of strategy, and the novice will outdo you. But above all other objections against the play of false cards stands the fact that the play may deceive partner, and there is nothing to be gained by the play that will begin to compensate for the loss of confidence such a play is sure to create. Let your cards speak the truth, not sometimes, but always.

Irregular Leads and Play.

Irregular play should not be confounded with false play. A false card is played for the express purpose of deceiving. It is unconventional play that no evidence of the previous play justifies. An irregular lead or play may be called a forced lead or play, but no law is thus violated. The various forms of finesse—underplay, holding up, throwing high cards, are all irregular play, but they are part of the strategy of the game.

The original leader, having strength in trumps and holding ace, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, may lead the fourth-best, not wishing to part with the command of the suit. The lead is irregular but perfectly proper. You may hold three great suits and the ace of trumps single, and lead the singleton—irregular, but the hand justifies it. With ace, k and two or more small, second hand, you may pass a small card led if your hand warrants it. You may lead from a short suit originally, though holding a long one—it is irregular, but proper if the situation demands it. A

may call, and B may refuse to answer, if he has sound reasons for it. You may refuse to take a trick, or pass two or more in succession. You are playing out of the ordinary routine, but you are not playing false.

If A leads the qu and it wins, he has no grounds for complaint if D afterwards plays the ace, but he has, if, to the qu, C plays the kn, holding the 10 also—and not calling. D has a good reason for his play; C not any. To A's lead of a small card B, holding ace, kn, 10 and others, may play the ace, finesse the 10, or pass the trick, but he has no right to play the kn. Fourth hand, holding quart major, may take the trick with the ace, and lead the kn. The play is irregular, but anything but false. It should be remembered that it is perfectly proper to play irregularly when the situation demands it, but that it is *never* right to play a false card. The one is good whist, the other is not whist at all.

Re-entry Cards.

Many players are in the habit of holding up winning cards beyond the limit of safety. Cards of re-entry are at times very valuable, and great care should be taken in some situations not to part with them, even to the extent of passing a trick or two. But they are valueless—as re-entry—when you have nothing to bring in.

It is particularly bad play to hold up winning cards when your partner is playing the strong game. For example, A opens the hand, showing a great suit, and then leads trumps; trumps come out and B gets in, he should play his aces and kings, if he has them, without regard to conventions; if he has no winning cards he should lead the best card he has of A's suit, if he has none of

A's suit, he should lead the best card in his hand; if it wins, the next best of the same suit. Play for A, and let him take care of the game.

It is not unusual to see the moderate player in the last few tricks of the hand, throw aces and kings or other winning cards, to his partner's tricks, or throw them to the adversaries' winning cards—cards that should have been made early in the play of the hand.

It is, of course, your duty to keep cards of re-entry to make your partner's suit, or for the purpose of throwing the lead. For instance, partner has a great suit established, but worthless unless you get him in. In such a situation you will endeavor to retain cards of re-entry.

Leading From Weakest Suits; Finessing to Save the Desperate Game.

Do not become panic-stricken because your opponents have displayed great strength, for shrewd defensive tactics may force a compromise that may yield you several tricks. Contest the ground, trick by trick, and husband your forces, though feeble, by deep finesse, and in this way keep control of some of the suits as long as possible. If you may save something from what appears overwhelming defeat, it is worth trying for. Your opponents may have overrated their strength, and through their prodigality and your economy toward the end you may be able to meet them upon equal ground, or finally put them to rout.

In the face of great odds do not play your best cards, but lead from your weak suits, partner must finesse deeply, and in turn adopt your defensive tactics by leading the highest card of his weak suit. The longer you keep control of your suits the more embarrassment you will give your adversaries, and the more backward will

be their game. If your finesses lose, they lose because of the overpowering strength against you. You must lose, in any event, unless the deep finesse wins, and if one or more of your finesses win you may save the game. When the situation is desperate, it must be met by desperate play.

The object in opening the weakest suit is that unless it finds partner with some strength you will not take a trick in it. Your strengthening card may warrant him in finesse, and if your lead happens to be *through* the hand that is moderately strong, *up* to the one who is weak, the play is advantageous. Or your high card, say qu or kn, may force a higher card from fourth hand, and eventually make good a card of medium rank for partner. It is much better for partner to open the highest of his weak suit up to your medium strength, than for you to open the suit up to his weakness. Suppose this case: C has the qu and two small; B has k, kn, and two small; D ace and two small; A 10, 9, and small. Now, if A leads the 10 through C, B passes, and D's ace is forced, and when A again leads, he leads the 9 through C, and A B have two tricks in the suit. If, on the other hand, B opens the suit, the qu and ace must make, and A B have but the single trick. The single trick gained may save the desperate game.

When the forces against you are evidently irresistible, as one hand marked with the long trumps and a great suit besides, there is no room for finesse. If you have the master card, play it, especially if it will save the game.

Foster's "Eleven Rule."

This is a simple and useful rule, applicable when a fourth-best card is led. Those not familiar with the

rank of the cards, are often perplexed when a low card is led, in instantly ascertaining the exact number of cards there are in the suit higher than the one led. For example: the 8 is the seventh in rank, the 7 is the eighth, and of course there are six cards higher in rank than the former, and seven higher than the latter. The rule is to deduct from eleven the number of pips on the card led, and the remainder is the number of cards in the suit, against the leader, higher than the one led. For example: the 7 is led, deduct it from 11, and it leaves 4, the number of cards in the suit, not in leader's hand, higher than the 7.

Listless Play.

Errors, bad plays, misconceptions, are all due, principally to listless play. If the mind be permitted to wander for an instant, an error is almost sure to follow. A single nod, and the odd and the game may go with it. The utmost vigilance is demanded of the whist player. Negligent play and good whist are incompatible. It will not do to simply stare upon the cards that fall, or even remember them in a mechanical way. You must not only see every card that falls, but you must know who played it, and the inference to be drawn from the play of each card must be noted at the time. It will not do to lag a trick or more in the rear.

The worst enemy to advancement in play is a listless manner. Every hand so played lowers the standard of the player's game. It is better not to play at all, than to play without earnestness. Your game will be more improved by one careful sitting than it can by any number of careless, half-hearted ones.

How to Become Proficient.

Those who care to play whist well must *study* the game, and practice with good players. Study, then apply to practice what you have learned in theory. Discuss the play; analyze it and note the fine plays and the errors. Do this *after* the play of the hand, never during the play. From the moment the first card touches the table until the last trick is turned, silence is the order.

Playing over printed games, or hands that you may have taken notes of, is most excellent practice. These should be analyzed in the most thorough manner, with all the cards spread upon the table. In this way the bad plays will be particularly impressed upon the mind, and their disastrous effects be so marked and evident that they will not be easily forgotten. Mark the bright plays, and when one occurs examine the situation and endeavor to meet the play with one as clever. Very often a brilliant play by A may be met by one as brilliant by C. When a finesse or underplay occurs examine it, for the success or failure of the play has nothing to do with it. The finesse may win, and through it several tricks be gained, and yet the play may have been wholly unjustifiable. On the other hand the finesse may lose a trick or more, and yet be perfectly proper play. To judge the propriety of a finesse you must take into consideration all the data furnished by the fall up to the point at which the finesse was made, the state of the score, the character of the hand making the finesse, etc., all these conditions must be considered. Such analysis as this will convince you that it is sometimes injudicious to finesse against a single card, and again that it is often right to risk a finesse against two or three cards. Finesse is speculation, and if the player is in desperate straits

he must take desperate chances, but, if he is on nearly equal footing with his opponents, it is evident that it is not sound policy to hazard a play for a *possible* gain of a trick to the *probable* loss of two.

In analyzing the play of hands, avoid falling into the common error of treating the play upon double dummy principles. Suppose in your analysis that you find A opened a hand with 4 h; first examine A's hand and decide for yourself whether this was the proper card to lead; then see what C played. Suppose that C played the 7, holding k, qu, 7, now, do not glance at the hands of B and D and decide that C played properly, because the 8 happens to be the best card B has of the suit, and D wins the trick with the 9. You should rather examine the finesse of C from the standpoint of his hand only. The usual play, second hand, holding k, qu and small card is the qu and the question is—was C justified in departing from the conventional play? Suppose that C held ace, qu, 10, 8 clubs (kn turned by D); ace, qu, 10 d; ace, qu, 10 s; and k, qu, 7 h, and you decide at once that C would not have played well to have put up the qu. C's hand is exceptional, it is a series of tenaces in all the suits, a hand to be led to, rather than to lead from. In the event of the trick going to B, C is then last player to the next trick, a position of great advantage with a hand like this. Observe this systematic course through the entire analysis of the hand. Then go back, and have C play qu at trick one, and then play best for all, and note the result. Do not conclude that C's finesse was not good, if by accident the cards lie so that he would have made another trick had he not finessed, for the best play does not always make the most tricks. A may open a hand with the 5 of trumps, holding ace, k, 6, 5, and he may find the qu and one small with C,

and lose a trick as against the play of k then ace, but this result has nothing to do with determining whether A played properly.

If you do not have printed hands, or hands that you have taken down from play, deal out the cards and play the hands in the best manner, and note the results of the different variations. Then test the books. Try the lead of a singleton as against the lead of the long suit. Force partner early in the play of the hand before any development has been made in trumps, and note the results. Lead from five small trumps and no strong suit, or before you have, in part at least, established your suit. Have partner miss your request for trumps, and straightway force you. Lead trumps and have partner fail to echo, and then go on with an unnecessary round. Call simply because you have five or six trumps. Have partner discard from his weakest suit when trumps are declared against, or have him hold up all his aces and kings "for re-entry" when you are playing the strong game, and he has nothing to bring in. Try leading through the calling hand, and if partner wins the trick cheaply have him return it, or if you have availed yourself of the opportunity of leading through the strong hand up to the weak, have him at once return it. Lead a thirteener for his best trump, and have him pass it, or lead it to force the adversary, and have him waste a trump upon it. In short, have him commit the different whist atrocities, and then have him play conventionally, and note the various results. You will occasionally find the unconventional play win more tricks than the proper play, but, when you do, note particularly if the chances are not against this in the majority of cases.

Analyses of this nature will tend to your rapid advancement. At the start do not attempt too much, and

become lost in the intricacies of the game. Master one thing at a time.

Duplicate Whist.

Duplicate whist has, within the last few years, become very popular, especially in match and tournament play. The object of this mode of play is to eliminate the element of luck. As every whist player knows, the preponderance of strength in cards may fall in favor of a pair, a team, or a club for an entire evening, and the score may have no value as a measure of the relative strength of the contestants. It is true that the fine players are known. The high order of their play proves their ability, no matter how the score stands. This is particularly obvious when the players are of marked unequal strength, but when teams of strong players meet, then, at regular whist, the victory goes with the players who have by accident held the strength in cards, and under such conditions there can be no such thing as a *contest.*

Some players are very much opposed to duplicate methods of play, and claim that those who indulge in it, acquire a dull and spiritless style, and that their overcautiousness renders them too bookish and routine. But, even if this be true, the fault lies with the players, not in the system of play. Good players have the same scope for brilliant work in the one game as in the other. In a match contest at duplicate whist, the primary object is to make tricks, make the most tricks that may be made with the cards. The secondary object is to make them in a brilliant manner. But should not brilliant play result in gain? To say that A made a brilliant play, a fine coup, and *lost* a trick, is nonsense or sarcasm. If strong players play at duplicate whist, and lose, it means, in the long run, that they have met stronger players. In

the end, the strongest players, the players who make the most of their cards, will come out victorious at duplicate whist. A single sitting will not decide anything, but a series of sittings or matches will invariably mark the stronger team. There is no escape from this conclusion. There can be no other test of skill at whist so perfect and absolute as a long series of matches between teams of four against four. The value of the quality of play must be weighed by tricks, and by tricks only. If A B by brilliant playing succeed in making as many tricks as C D, who played the same cards in a routine manner, the applause is with A B, but their brilliant play must be supported by the stubborn facts—*tricks*. It is admitted that bad play or unconventional play will occasionally result in more tricks than good play. Four really strong players might be defeated in a single sitting at duplicate whist by four weak players, but this would be phenomenal. So, also, four strong players may lose to four players not quite so strong, through an unfortunate distribution of the cards, but the fact remains that, in the long run, at duplicate whist, the element of "luck" is practically eliminated, and the chances of the weaker players is virtually *nil*.

There are various methods devised for playing duplicate whist, some of which have very objectionable features. For a perfect test of skill, four players should play against four, and no player should overplay the same hand, and the relative position of the four players should change at every hand, that is to say, each player should be dealer, first, second, and third hand an equal number of times during the contest.

All whist contests, all match games, to carry with them any value as a test of skill, must be played in duplicate. This method of playing whist renders it

practicable to conduct whist tournaments, for the purpose of ascertaining the relative strength of the contestants, as in other games of skill; and for this, if for nothing else, it is a most valuable adjunct to the game of whist.

Pertinent Axioms.

"Silence is golden."
Don't be in a hurry.
Make it easy for partner.
Play both hands as one.
In union there is strength.
Never play a false card.
Play with uniform deliberation.
Always do your very best.
Play out every card of the hand.
Respect the rank of the cards.
Keep an eye upon the score.
Discuss the play only between the deals
Every hand is an untried problem.
Do not make a hobby of the call.
Be fertile in attack, skillful in retreat.
Good play may lose, bad play may win.
Avoid random shots—you may hit partner.
Win with becoming modesty and dignity.
Be conventional when it suits your hand.
A coup is a well-judged departure from rule.
Remember the trump card and its relation to you.
Let the cards discourse, but the tongue be mute.
All rules stand second to the fall of the cards.
If you have a weak hand do not emphasize it.
Do not always overtrump simply because you can.
An ingenious placing of the lead may be very advantageous.

Do not, as a rule, unguard an honor or blank an ace.

Withhold information when you deem it best to do so.

That it "made no difference" is no palliation for a bad play.

You gather the cards if partner takes the first trick.

Do not call simply because you have four or more trumps.

Eternal vigilance is the price of the best whist.

Always count your hand before a card is played.

Note particularly where the strength in each suit lies.

Your first discard is as important as your first lead.

Do not deplore weak hands nor exult over strong ones.

Keep your eyes on the table and see each card as it falls.

Depart from rule at any time to make or save a game.

It is a pure waste of time to play poor whist.

Never hurry—if you have not time to play two games, play one.

When you discard the best card of a suit you have control.

It is fine play only that merits admiration and praise.

Play irregularly when it suits your hand or that of your partner.

If you win with invincible cards your victory is cheap.

The highest order of play does not always make the most tricks.

Note the play of your adversaries as carefully as that of your partner.

You should have most excellent reasons for passing a winning card.

Re-entry cards are valueless unless you have something to bring in.

Make no demonstrations of approval or disapproval at any time.

You should always play the best whist of which you are capable.

First learn to play by rule, then learn when to depart from rule.

When you discard the second-best card of a suit you should have no more.

When it is evident that your line of play is not practicable, abandon it.

The combination of forces is the theory of modern scientific whist.

When trumps are declared against you, discard from your best suit.

False, forced, irregular or bad play may prove a source of doubt or error.

You can draw inferences early in the play with almost absolute certainty.

It is as important to see your opponents' call or echo as it is to see your partner's.

Be careful about reading second hand play for a call—it may be a cover.

Do not play as though you were afraid your partner might take a trick.

Be careful how you throw a singleton early in the hand—it may be partner's great suit.

When you accept a partner, you accept him as he is, not as you might wish him to be.

When you see a way to win, take that way, no matter what the conventional guide-posts read.

Take it for granted that your partner is a whist player until you know that he is not.

When you do not know what card to play, somebody has been playing poor whist—yourself, most likely.

Each card thrown has something to say, and you should be equally attentive to all.

Read only the cards, and never attempt to draw inferences from the mannerisms of the players.

Use your eyes and your head, not your fists or your feet; physical whist is in bad form.

Playing for a ruff is cheap whist, and there is nearly always something better to play for.

Theoretical perfection must be accompanied with acute perception in order to play good whist.

Do not discard too close in partner's great suit; you may need more than one or two cards of it.

Play a poor hand with as much care as a good one, for the game may be won or lost by the play of a "Yarborough."

Do not draw inferences too rigidly, nor from them form a line of play that you may not easily abandon.

Draw your inferences in the middle or end hand, subject to the fact that the play may be forced or irregular.

Do not refuse to take a trick unless the chances are that you will eventually take *two* in lieu of the *one* you pass.

Throw your card upon the table near the centre, but avoid throwing it so that it will slide under those already played.

The finesse of the 6 against the possible 7 is a brighter play than the major tenace finesse, and often more effective.

Do not ignore the value of the little cards; they, like the pawns at chess, have their duty to perform after the big fellows have fallen in battle.

There is no easy way to learn to play whist; you cannot go across lots; you must tramp the old turnpike-road —study and practice.

Do not "blow up" your partner if he makes a blun-

der, if he is worth having for a partner, he knows he has blundered as well as you do.

Do not forget the inferences you drew early in the play of the hand, for they are the guide-posts that point the way to final victory, and the simplest one forgotten may be the cause of your ultimate ruin.

Theory leads you smoothly enough along the well-trodden paths of the opening play; but when you enter into the depths of the after play, you lose your way if you have not accurate judgment to fall back upon.

CHAPTER XXVI.

COUNTING THE HANDS.

In order to play whist well it is necessary to read the fall of the cards with moderate rapidity. The simpler inferences can be drawn rapidly, and with but little mental effort. To do this the players must be very familiar with the leads, the unblocking play, the call, the trump echo and all the recognized conventions of whist play.

To remember the cards that have been played is a comparatively small matter, but to be able to read the cards as they fall, and carry the information afforded to the end of the hand, is a matter of the greatest importance. It is very essential to note the fall of the *small cards*, and to mark the absence of any small card that naturally should have fallen, for the fact that a small card is missing, is notice that some one has withheld its play for a definite purpose.

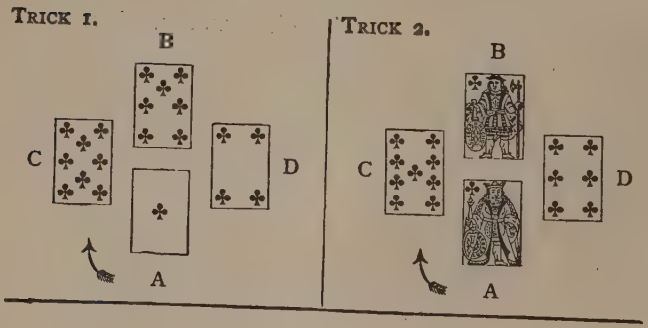
A great many inferences may be drawn from the lead and follow that should require but little mental effort. For instance, if A leads the ace, as an original lead, and follows with the qu, B should know intuitively, that A has the kn and one small card yet in hand. If the ace is followed by the kn, the queen and two others are proclaimed. Such inferences as these all the players should read without any studying or counting. If a player

must stop to think, or if he is in the least doubt, he cannot play good whist, for the mind should not be harassed with things that should be known without mental effort.

A number of exercises follow, and these should be thoroughly examined, as they will aid the unadvanced in becoming proficient in counting the hands.

No. 1.—Ace, Then King.

A's cards—

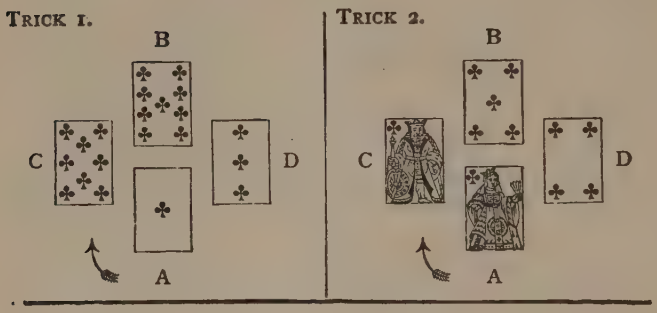


Remark (Trick 1).—This is a very ordinary round, and yet it must put the quartette to thinking, and on the

alert for the next round. C, B and D each notes that the deuce and trey have not fallen, and they know that A must have both of these cards, unless some one is calling or B unblocking, and all mark that comparatively high cards have been played.

Trick 2.—The fall is very informatory. A can place the remaining cards of the suit, and all because *one small card has not fallen.* Suppose that D had played the 5 and not the 6, in the second round, then A could not place a single card in the suit. Mark how important it is for A to know that the 5 has not come out. C has not the 5 as he would have played it to the first trick, and not the 8; D would have played the 5, if with him, and not the 6. (There is a possibility that C or D began a call and abandoned it, but this contingency is hardly worth considering, and will not be referred to hereafter.) A not having the 5, gives it to B. Why did B not play it to the first trick instead of the 7? The answer to this is that B began to unblock the first round, and so must have held exactly four cards of the suit. A has denied the qu, but admitted five in suit, consequently B must have the qu and 5. B knows, of course, that A has the 10, 3, 2. C reads that if D has the qu, A must hold the 10, 5, 3, 2, for if B has not the qu he cannot have the 5. The student will mark that the information published by the conventional play of A and B is all in their favor, and that while C and D can also read the *probable* position of the remaining cards of the suit, they cannot absolutely place the suit as A and B can. Note also that if B does not adopt the unblocking tactics, that A cannot place the remaining cards of the suit, for if B plays first the 5, then 7, the qu and kn may be, for anything A can read, with either C or D, and this would make a very material difference in A's game.

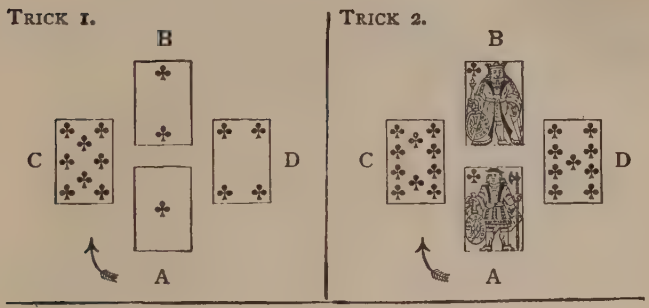
No. 2.—Ace, Then Queen.



Remark (Trick 1).—It will not do to conclude that B is short of the suit because he plays so high a card as the 9, for he may be unblocking and calling. C is evidently short in the suit, and D may be long.

Trick 2.—Here the fall is very informatory. A, by the play of ace, then qu, denies the ten and announces a suit of four cards. A can place the cards exactly, the deuce has not fallen and he gives it to B, who has called and unblocked. B must have one card higher than the 9, and is therefore marked with the 10, 2. D must have the 7, and C void. B cannot tell whether the 7 or the 6 is with A, but he knows that D has one or the other.

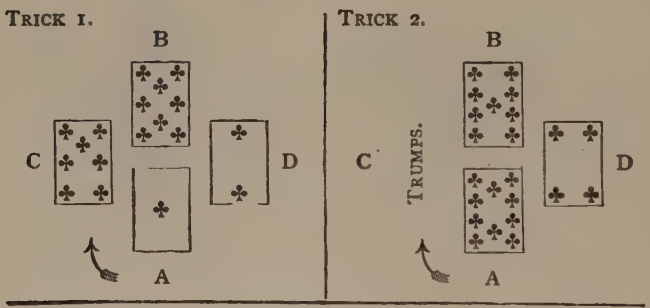
No. 3.—Ace, Then Knave.



Remark (Trick 1).—A reads that B has not exactly four cards of the suit, and is not calling.

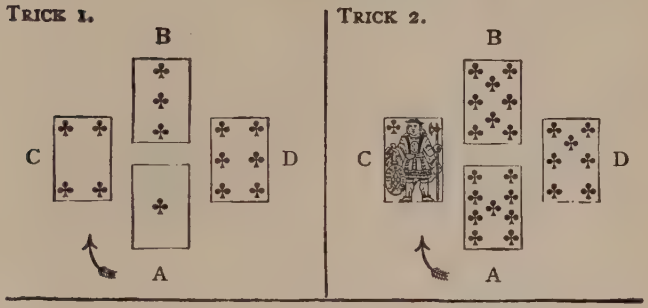
Trick 2.—A shows the qu and at least two small cards yet in hand. B played the k on his partner's kn to get out of the way. Had C renounced or trumped the second round, then B must have thrown the 3, which the fall shows must be in his hand. In the event of C not following suit to the kn, the 10 and two others could be with D, and a trick might be lost by B attempting to unblock.

No. 4.—Ace, Then 10.



Remark.—A and B can count the suit with accuracy. A knows that B has the k, 3, and D the 6, 5. B must have unblocked, as the 3 has not fallen, and A has denied all but qu and the kn, for if A held one or more small cards, he would have followed the ace with the kn, it being of more importance to show the numerical strength than to show the 10. B and C also know that D has the 6, 5, and D that B has the k, 3.

No. 5.—Ace, Then 9.

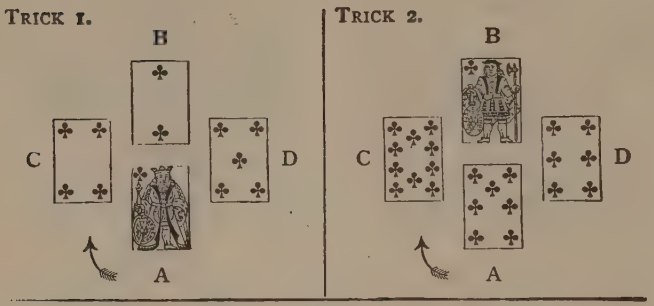


Remark (Trick 1).—A reads that B has not exactly four cards of the suit and is not calling.

Trick 2.—The second round shows that B can have no more. A must have qu, 10, 2 for the ace then 9 (the kn falling) marks the qu, 10, and as the 2 has not come out it must be with A. The only cards that cannot be placed are the k and 5; the k may be with either C or D; the 5 may be with either C or A. Here is a good point in second hand play. Suppose D has the k, C the 5, then if C plays the 5 to the second trick, the 9 forces D's k, and a trick is lost. When ace is led followed with the 9, second hand holding kn and two others originally, must play the kn on the 9, for if k is in third hand no harm is done, if in fourth hand, a trick may be gained.

No. 6.—King, Then Small.

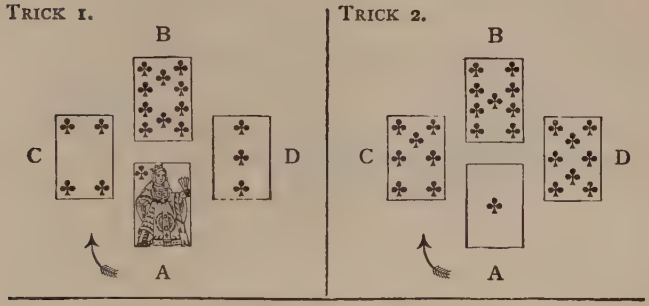
A's cards—



Remark (Trick 1).—The presumption here is that A or B has the ace, but this inference must be drawn subject to the fact that the opponents may be holding up. It is a common artifice, C or D holding ace, kn to pass the k led. A must have, however, either ace or qu, or both, and he can have but three more cards in the suit. B may have exactly four cards of the suit, though playing the 2, for when k is led, third hand does not unblock, holding four in suit.

Trick 2.—B must have the ace, 3 yet in hand; C can have no more, and D the 9 or void.

No. 7.—Queen, Then Ace.



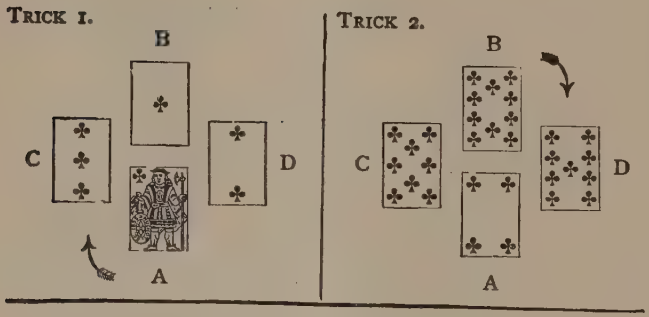
Remark (Trick 1).—A knows that B has the kn or no more, or had four exactly, and is calling and unblocking.

Trick 2.—The fall is very informatory. A shows by the play of the qu, then ace, the k and just two small cards. The cards that have come out in these two rounds show that C and D can have no more of the suit. The 6, 5, 2 have not fallen. A cannot have all three, as he has proclaimed but five in suit; these three cards are all lower in rank than the cards C and D have played to the last trick, and unless C or D began a call on the second round, they can have none of these cards, and one of them must be with B. If B had one of these cards and not the kn also, he would have called by first playing the 9 and then the small card. It is evident that B must have held kn, 10, 9 and one of these small cards, and that A can read that B has called and un-

blocked. Note how important this information is to A, and that if he failed to read the play, or if B had not adopted the unblocking game, how much in doubt A would be as to the location of the kn.

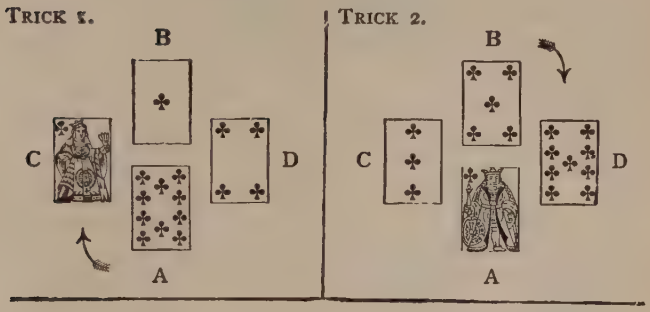
No. 8.—The Knave Led.

A's cards—



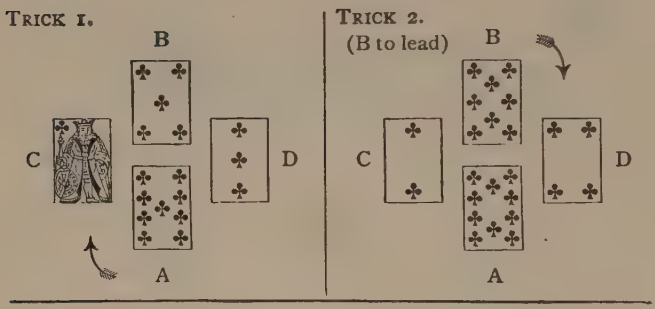
Remark.—The rest of the suit must be with A. C can have no more, D must be void—playing the 9. If B held three or more of the suit originally, he would have passed the kn led by A. By passing the 10, A informs B that he does not care to have the lead.

No. 9.—The 10 Led.



Remark.—It can be demonstrated from the fall alone, where the remaining cards of the suit are. A's lead of the 10 announced the k, kn; C's play of the qu then 3, shows that he can have no more. D's play of the 9 marks him as void, and A's play of the k, in the second round, shows that he led from exactly four in the suit, for had A five or more in the suit, he would have played the kn on the return of the suit. B must have three cards of the suit yet in hand, and these three cards must be the 8, 7, 6; the deuce cannot be one, for if he held the deuce he would have returned it, and not the 5. A must have the kn, 2 yet in hand. The information imparted by the fall in these two rounds is unusually definite.

No. 10.—The 9 Led.

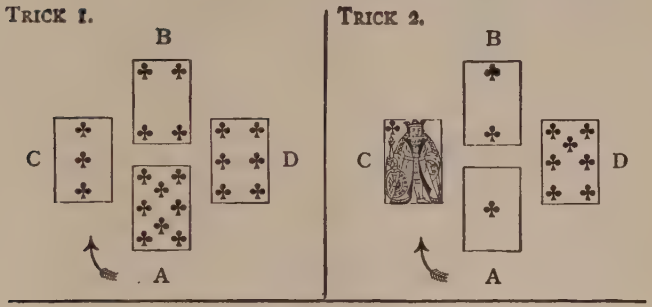


Remark (Trick 1).—A, by the lead of the 9, shows four cards only, and the ace, 10 is proclaimed, with either the qu or kn. C is marked with one small only, as with k and more than one small he would have played small.

Trick 2.—B, by returning the 8, can have but the 7 or 6, or no more. A finesses the 10 on the return, and this he would do holding either ace, qu, 10 or ace, kn, 10, for C cannot have the qu or kn. B cannot tell whether D has the qu or kn. A will not go on with the suit unless he has ace, qu, but will wait to have B come through D again.

No. 11.—The 8 Led.

A's cards—



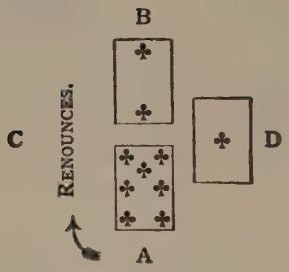
Remark (Trick 1).—What a story from the fall in this round. A reads B with at least the qu, 9, 2; he *must* have these, possibly the king also; if B has the k he must also have the qu, 9, he cannot have k, qu, nor the k or qu, and not the 9, for in either case he must then have played one of these cards.

Trick 2.—The fall in this round marks B with the qu, 9, 5, and B very properly passed the 8 first round, for he could read that A's 8 must hold the trick or force the k—the one card against. To put up the qu, would only withhold valuable information from A. C should have played k on the 8 led, as with k and one small, the 8 led, there is no avail in keeping the king.

No. 12.—The 7 Led.

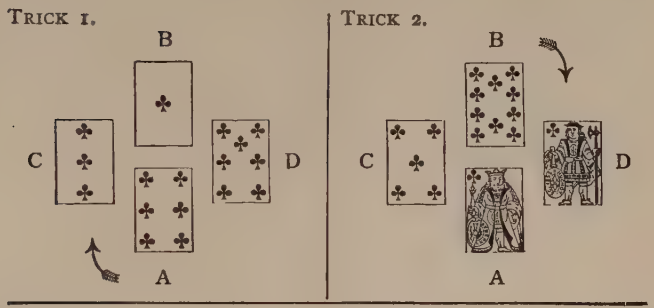
A's cards—

TRICK 1.



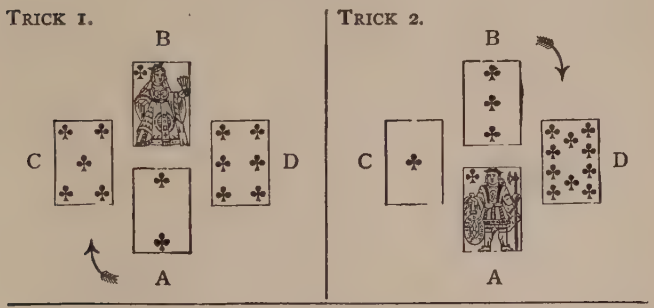
Remark.—An unusual distribution of a suit will often confuse the novice where the advanced player will at once read the location of every material card. This is a case in point. A at once reads B with the qu, kn, 8. B, knowing that the 7 will force the ace or k, that must be with D, passes, simply for the purpose of enabling A to read the situation.

No. 13.—The 6 Led.



Remark.—The lower the rank of the card led, the less positive information it imparts. Yet there are always inferences to be drawn that are important and may be missed. The fall in these two rounds shows that the qu is against A B; that B has the 4 or 2 or no more; A the 9, 8 and either the 4 or 2—possibly both.

No. 14.—The Deuce Led.



Remark.—This card of lowest rank has always inter-

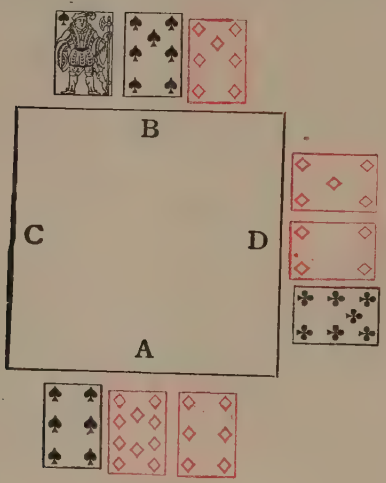
esting information to impart. The fall to the first round does not afford much positive information. B may have the ace. The second round marks D as void, B with at least two more, C at most one more. A, holding k, kn, 8, 2 originally, knows from the fall that B must have the 4, and so at least one more, and that C, if he has the 9, does not have it guarded, and hence the suit is established.

CHAPTER XXVII.

CRITICAL ENDINGS.

THE end-hand in whist is very often susceptible of brilliant treatment. It is here that the liability to error is greatest. To insure correctness in end-play, the most consummate understanding of the entire game is requisite. In the intricacies of the ending the ordinary player not infrequently misses the way, and with it the *one* trick to be played for. You must enter the end-hand equipped with all the inferences drawn from the previous fall. It is here the clever things, the brilliant coups, the extempore strategy are elicited ; and beautiful, indeed, is the denouement of a well-fought hand that ends with some artistic and unexpected stroke. A number of endings, illustrating some well-known principles, are given, which should be carefully examined by the student. Many are very simple, others intricate. The simplest, however, are worthy the attention of players who are not familiar with the strategy of the game, and it is, indeed, surprising how many people play at whist, from youth to old age, and never suspect they have overlooked the simplest points in whist play.

Ending 1.—Winning Partner's Trick.



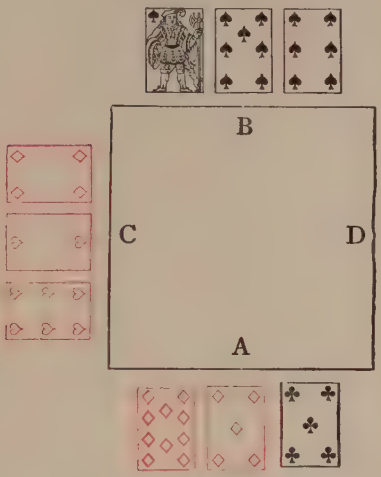
(Diamonds trumps—B leader.)

This simple ending is of very frequent occurrence, and the principle involved may come up in a variety of ways.

1.—B leads 7 d; D plays 4; A plays 10 d, and draws the last trump from D. Had A, knowing the 7 was good,

thrown the 6, D must have made his last trump. Here is another phase:—

Ending 2.—Trumping Partner's Trick.



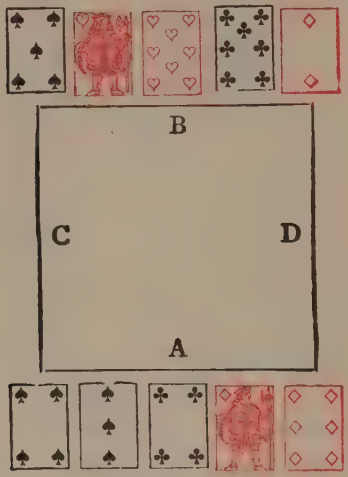
(Diamonds trumps—B leader.)

1.—B leads kn s; A plays 10 d; C plays 2 h.

A trumps his partner's trick that he may draw C's last trump. This is so simple that one would imagine that no one could ever blunder in it, yet often the odd is lost in just such a situation as this. If A, knowing that the kn is the best spade in, throws the club, he lets the small trump make. A should trump, in such situations, even if he is not sure his remaining card is good; for, if it is not, the best may be with partner, or, if with

opponent, he *may* throw it,—a trick is lost for *sure* if he does not trump and draw the trump.

Ending 3.—Putting Partner in by Leading Your Last Trump.



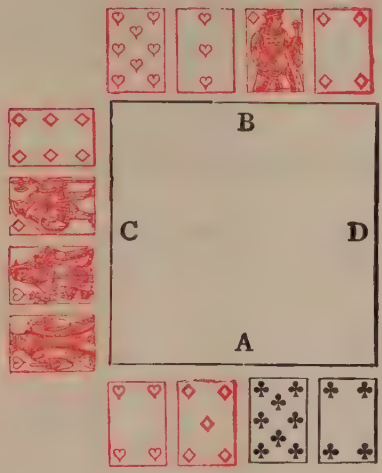
(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

C D have losing hearts and diamonds, but the best spades; B is marked with the 7 of trumps and the kn of hearts; he unblocked in diamonds, and must have the 2; A is in, and requires every trick to make the game:—

1.—A leads 4 c; B plays 7; and then leads the kn and 8 of hearts, giving A two discards in spades, and then leads the 2 of d—and the game is won.

The inference A has drawn early in the play, and carried with him to the ending, enables him to win by what appears poor play, viz., drawing the last trump from his partner.

Ending 4.—Putting Opponent to the Discard.



(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

A has the last two trumps—clubs; C is marked with the kn and a small d, and the best hearts; B king and small d and losing h.

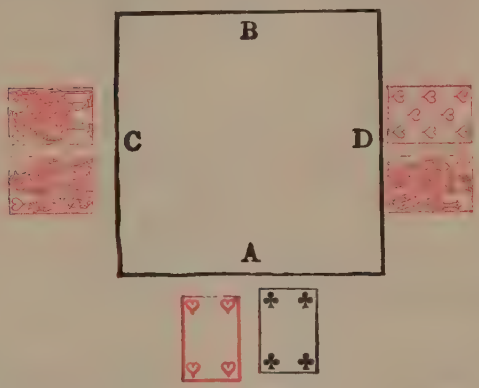
1.—A leads 8 c; C plays qu h; B plays 3 h.

C is put to the discard here and throws the h, which is better than the d, as it forces A to make the best play or lose a trick.

2.—A leads 4 c; the last trump; there is now no escape for C, if he throws the heart, B throws the d; if the d, B the h, and A B take all the tricks. A, by putting C to two discards, makes good for B either the small h or d. B must be awake here, and discard subject to the cards C throws. When you are left with the last trump

and a losing card of suit, you will, of course, always lead the trump for you may find one of the opponents with two winning cards of different suits, and if your card cannot be placed or if through carelessness he throws the wrong card, you gain a trick.

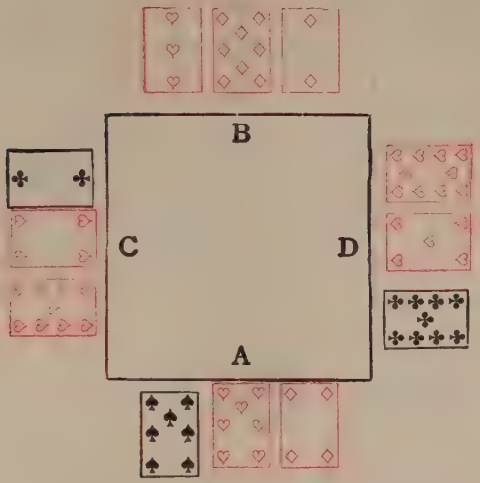
Ending 5.—Leading Thirteenth Trump to Force a Discard.



(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

A is left with a losing heart and the last trump; he should lead the trump, and if C throws the h and D should have no heart, he gains a trick. A leads 4 c; C throws qu h; D should now throw king of d, for it is certain that C is holding a d, and if A's small card is a heart D wins it, if a d, C.

Ending 6.—Leading Thirteenth Trump to Gain Information from the Discard.



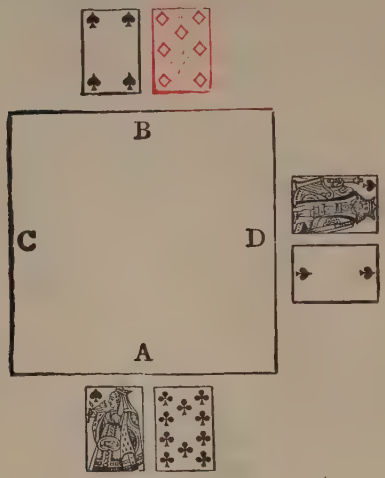
(Spades trumps—A leader.)

You sometimes find it of advantage to lead the thirteenth trump in order to gain information from the fall. A, in the above ending holds the last trump—a spade, and a losing d and h and is in doubt as to where the master cards in these two suits lie. B may have a winning h or d but A is uncertain which.

1.—A leads thirteenth trump; C plays 2 c; B plays 3 h; D plays 5 h.

A now gives B the best d and leads the 4, and A B take all the tricks. Had A selected the heart at random, a trick would have been lost.

Ending 7.—Trumping a Thirteener.



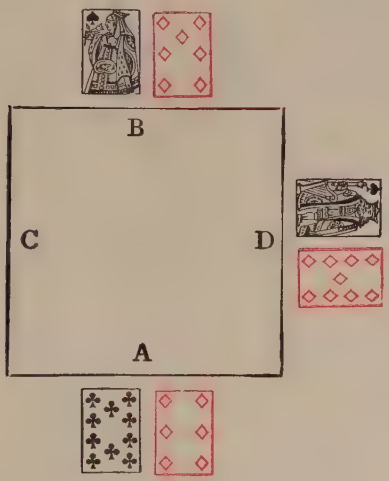
(Spades trumps—A leader.)

Here is an ending illustrating a point that comes up very often in end-play, and simple as it is even fair players often lose a trick. Spades are trumps; four are yet in—two of which are marked with D.

1.—A leads the thirteenth c; B, having a losing trump, reads that A has led the thirteener for his last trump, that it may force the play of D's master trump, making good A's second-best trump. If the position of the 4 and 2 are reversed no harm results, as in this event D must make both tricks. You should *always* trump a thirteenth card led by partner at trick twelve when your left-hand opponent is marked with two and your partner with one trump. The 4 in the last example makes the qu

good, and if the trumps are exchanged with A B, the result will be the same—the qu making the 4 good. If, however, the opponent has but *one* trump and that the *best*, the thirteenth is led to force it, and you, of course, do not trump it, as in the following:—

Ending 8.—Passing a Thirteenth.

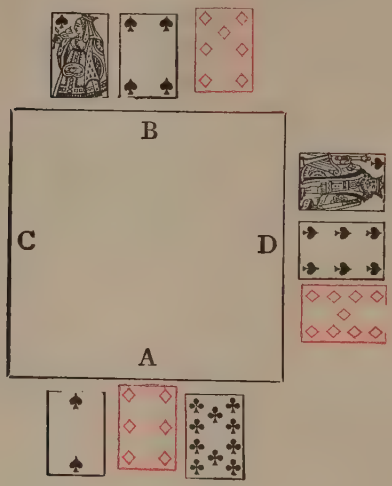


(Spades trumps—A leader.)

1.—A leads 10 c ; here it is led for B to pass, for if B trumps both tricks are lost. These are simple cases and the purpose of the thirteener is easy to divine, but endings of this nature occur wherein you must carefully

read the situation, and to do this you must have at hand all the inferences from the previous rounds. Suppose:—

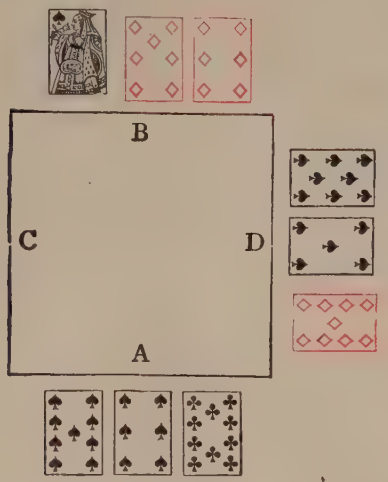
Ending 9.—Passing a Thirteener to Preserve Your Tenace.



(Spades trumps—A leader).

1.—A leads the thirteenth c, reading D with the probable tenace over B. B must pass or lose all three tricks. Once more:—

Ending 10.—Trumping a Thirteener to Make Your Partner's Trump Tenace.



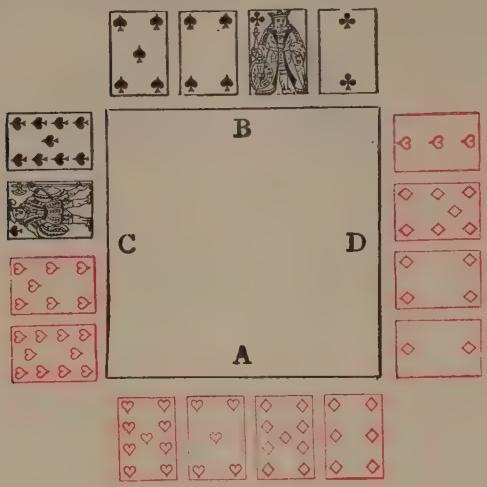
(Spades trumps—A leader.)

Here the situation is not so easily read.

1.—A leads the thirteenth c; B must trump or lose a trick. A was forced to lead the c, as the lead of a trump also loses a trick.

The last six endings illustrate the value and use of thirteenth cards in end-play, and the student will see the necessity of carefully considering the object of a thirteenth card when led by a good partner or opponent. You may throw away a well-played game by trumping a thirteener when you should not, or by not trumping when you should.

Ending 11.—Refusing to Overtrump.



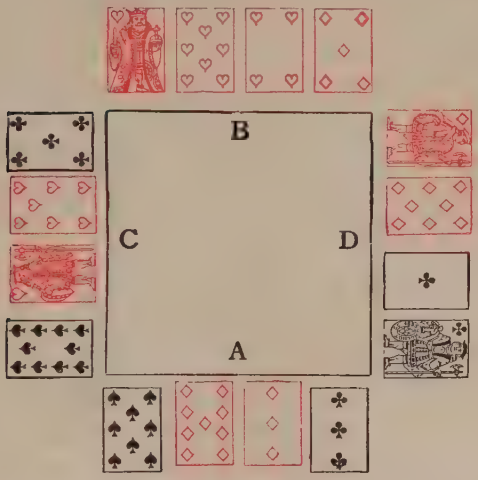
(Hearts trumps—B leader.)

Care should be taken in overtrumping late in hand, or at any time, when you have the second and fourth best trump, especially if you need but one trick to make or save the game. It is also dangerous to trump when *you may be overtrumped.* In the above ending a trick is lost if A does not refuse to overtrump.

1.—B leads k c; D trumps; A overtrumps; C, in turn, overtrumps A, draws his last trump and makes the spades. If, on the other hand, A refuses to overtrump, he must make his 9 of trumps. Such positions are of frequent occurrence. Of course there are situations the reverse of this, and if you do not overtrump you lose a trick. In this example, A being able to read the dia-

monds with D should have thrown the 6 d; D must have gone on with a d and A's 9 d would have forced C to take or yield the immediate trick.

Ending 12.—Overtrumping.



(Spades trump—A leader.)

Here is a phase of overtrumping that frequently turns up. The hands can be read; A is in, and if he leads either a trump or d, he loses every trick.

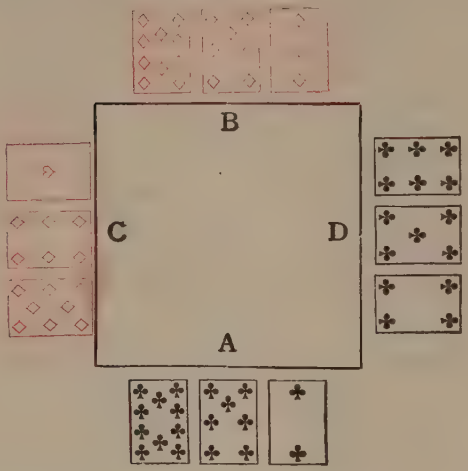
1.—A leads 3 c, C plays 5 c; B plays 5 d; D plays kn c.

2.—D leads ace c; A trumps; C plays 7 h; B plays 4 h.

If C overtrumps A he loses a trick, for he must then lead a heart to B, but, by passing, he forces A to lead his

minor tenace in d up to D's major tenace. A having no heart to give B, A must throw the lead into D's hand and trust to C making the blunder of overtrumping.

Ending 13.—Refusing to Trump a Sure Trick.



(Diamonds trump—A leader.)

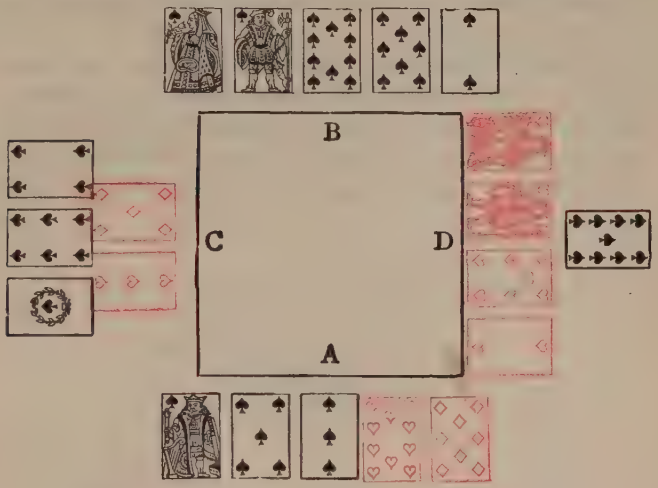
C knows that B has a superfluous trump.

1.—A leads 10 c; C plays ace h; B plays 3 d; D plays 4 c.

C here throws the ace h, refusing to trump, as he knows B has three trumps and that he *must* trump his partner's trick. If C trumps the 10 c, although a sure winning card, he loses a trick. B may have missed the grand coup here, some tricks back, and in such cases

you must, like C, prevent him from recovering the lost opportunity.

Ending 14.—Refusing to Draw the Losing Trump.



(Diamonds trumps—A leader.)

B has shown s as his suit; hearts are established in D's hand; C can have but *one* heart and the losing trump and three spades. A is in and should not draw the losing trump, but lead the king s, to clear up B's suit. Note the play:

1.—A leads k s; C plays ace s; B plays 2 s; D plays 9 s.

2.—C leads 3 h; B plays 8 s; D plays kn h; A plays 10 h.

3.—D leads qu h; A trumps; C plays 4 s; B plays 10 s.

4.—A leads 5 s; C plays 6 s; B plays kn s; D plays 2 h.

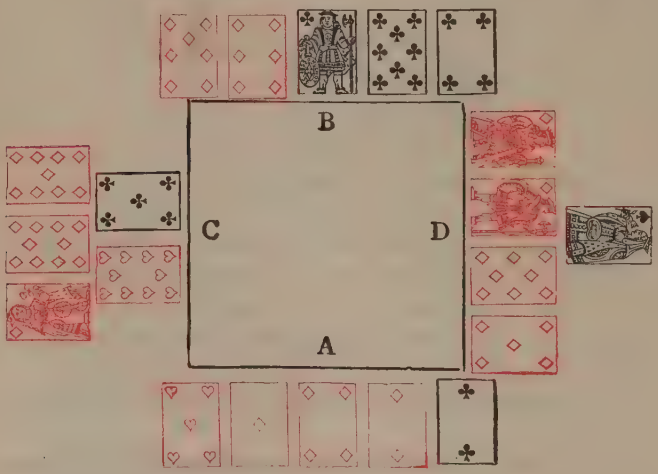
And A B have two tricks. If on the other hand—

1.—A leads 8 d; C plays 5 d; B plays 2 s; D plays 9 s.

If A now leads a h, D takes and brings in the suit; if a spade, C takes and gives D a heart, and A B take but the single trump trick.

Refusing to draw the losing trump is, however, very delicate work, and in the majority of cases it is best to draw it. As a rule it is best not to draw the trump when one of the opponents has a long, established suit and your partner a suit that requires one round to clear it up.

Ending 15.—Leading the Losing Trump.



(Hearts trumps—A leader.)

In the preceding example it is shown that it is best not

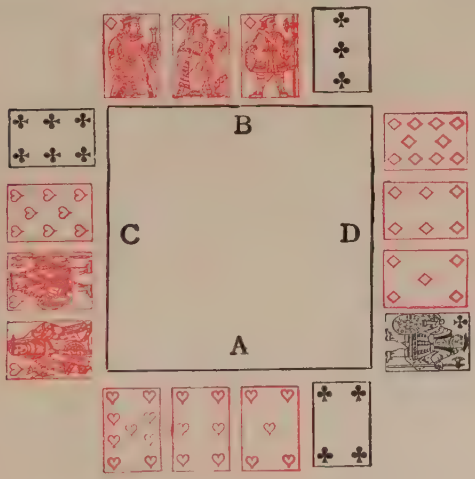
to draw the losing trump, and it sometimes happens that it is best to lead the losing one in order to place the lead. A knows the 10 h is with C; B the best clubs; D the queen of spades; Diamonds have not been led.

1.—A leads 5 h; C plays 10 h; B plays 6 d; D plays 5 d.

2.—C leads qu d; B plays 7 d; D plays 8 d; A plays ace d.

3.—A leads 2 c; and B brings in the clubs. Any other lead but the losing trump must result in loss to A B.

Ending 16.—Leading a Losing Card to Place the Lead.

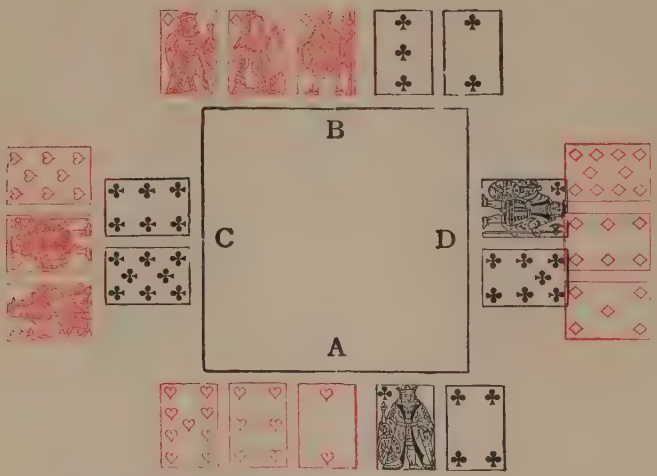


(Trumps out—A leader.)

Very much depends upon the *lead* in critical endings, and to know how and when to place it is worth the con-

sideration of all students of the game. Here is a position in which A can throw away three tricks by a single bad play. B is marked with the control of d; D the losing d; C the winning hearts; A to lead; he has no d to give to B; if he leads a heart he loses every trick. He must lead the c and trust to finding D with the best, thus throwing the lead to D, and he in turn must give B the diamonds and A B take three tricks of the four. Suppose we go back a trick in this ending, giving to each player a club, and then we have:—

Ending 17.—Throwing High Cards to Avoid the Lead.



(Trumps out—A leader.)

1.—A leads k c; C plays 6; B plays 2; D plays kn. D plays a beautiful coup here; if he throws the 7, he

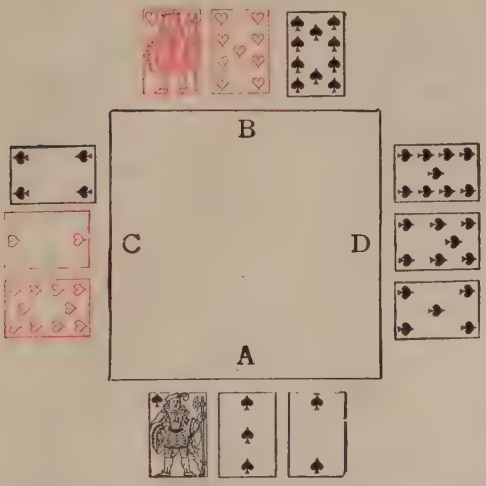
loses two tricks. D, being able to read the position of the diamonds, should throw the kn c, even if he is uncertain as to C's clubs. D must not get the lead—it is fatal. In the event of A remaining with the best c, D must still profit by the play, for eventually A must give C the heart.

2.—A leads 4 c, C plays 8 c; B plays 3 c; D plays 7 c.

A must go on with the 4 c, hearts must come to him, to lead them loses a trick.

3.—C makes the qu and kn of hearts, and A the 9 h.

Ending 18.—Taking the Eleventh Trick, Although Already Won by Partner.



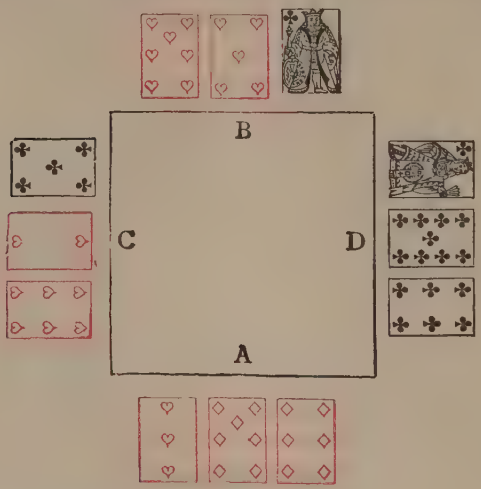
(Hearts trumps—C leader.)

Positions like this are of frequent occurrence. It is known that C and B each have two trumps.

1.—C leads 4 s; B plays 10 s; D plays 5 s; A plays kn s.

If A passes the trick simply because it is already his partner's, he loses a trick, as B must then lead up to C's tenace in trumps. In all such cases you should take the eleventh trick, no matter if you cannot read the tenace with partner, as you can in no event lose, and may save a trick by the play. The principle illustrated here presents itself under different phases. Suppose this case:—

Ending 19.—Trumping Partner's Trick at Trick Eleven.



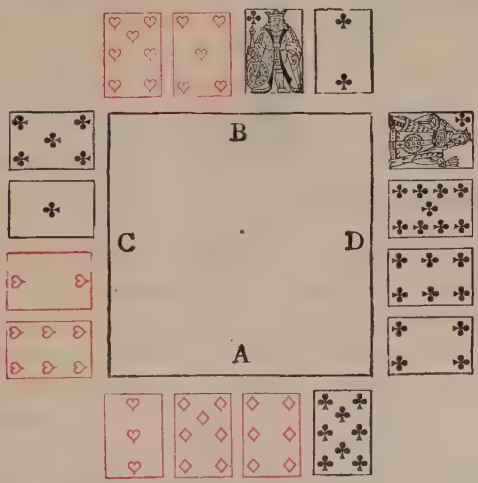
(Hearts trumps—C leader.)

1.—C leads 5 c; B plays k c; D plays 6; A trumps.

The principle here is the same as in the foregoing example, but the coup is more brilliant, as A apparently throws away a trump; but a moment's reflection shows that A s trump is valueless, except for this purpose.

B should be careful—in positions like No. 19—not to force this coup upon A, if it can be avoided, for the most wideawake partner will sometimes nod. Let us go back one trick in the last ending, and then we have:—

Ending 20.—Making It Easy for Partner.

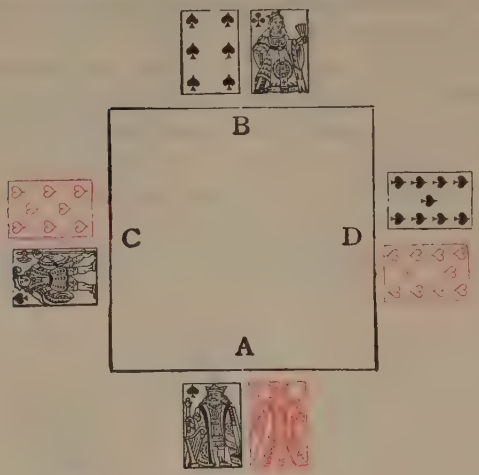


(Hearts trumps—C leader.)

1.—C leads ace c; B plays k c; D plays 4 c; A plays 8 c.

2.—C leads 5 c; B plays 2 c; D plays 6 c—A will, of course, trump, as the trick is against him. B here plays the coup, and makes it easy for A.

Ending 21.—Making It Easy and Sure.

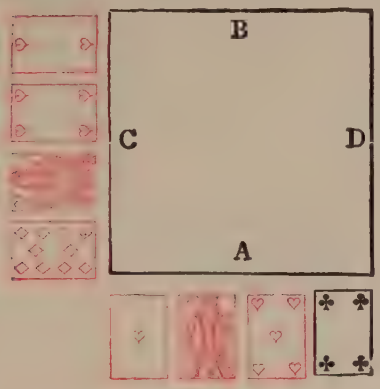


(Trumps out—B leader.)

A is marked with the two kings absolute; B is in, and should lead the 6 s, and not the thirteenth c, for A may throw the wrong king and a trick be lost. It matters not that A *should* read B with a spade; he *may* not. It may be very evident to B that A should know that B can have no heart, but this is no reason why B should put A to the test; he must take the certainty, for, no matter how good a player A may be, he may have missed the inference that would have directed him to make the proper play. Suppose, in the above situation, four or five tricks were yet in hand, B holding say three good clubs, the last trump, and the losing spade; he should lead the spade at once—if he knows A has the best spade—as he can trump the card next led by A, and makes his clubs. If he goes on with the clubs, A may

throw the k s. This is all apparently too simple to refer to, but these little, simple points are frequently missed.

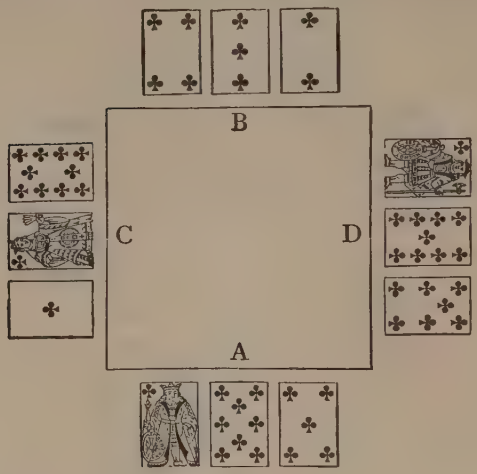
Ending 22.—Underplay by Leader.



(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

Underplay is a strategy resorted to in the end-hand, and is often very effective. A should lead the 5 h, and if C passes, as he would most likely do, unless he suspects the manœuvre. B may win with the kn; if he does not, no harm is done, as A will trump the next trick, and make his ace and king. If, on the other hand, he leads ace and king, C will, of course, hold up the qu, and the 5 must lose. A simply takes the chance of B winning the first trick for him, with no risk to run in doing so.

Ending 23.—Underplay to Place the Lead.



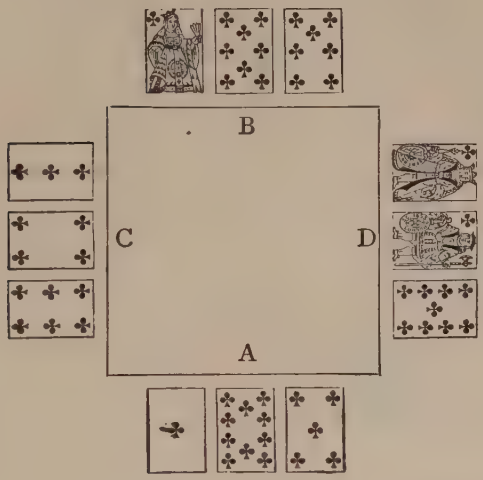
(Trumps out—B leader.)

This suit has not been led; A B have six tricks in, and need but a single trick to make the odd and game:—

1.—B leads 4; D plays 7; A plays 8; C plays 10.

A underplays here to force the lead to C, that he may be last player to the next round, thus insuring him the needed trick. D threw the game away; he should have put on the kn, and there was no trick in the suit for A B, for if A refuses to put up the king, the kn wins, and C, of course, finesses on the return and the king is gone. The knave was the play, for unless C had the major tenace, the game was lost. D should have played the kn for the purpose of preventing A doing just what he did do—underplay.

Ending 24.—Holding Up and Underplay.



(Trumps out—B leader.)

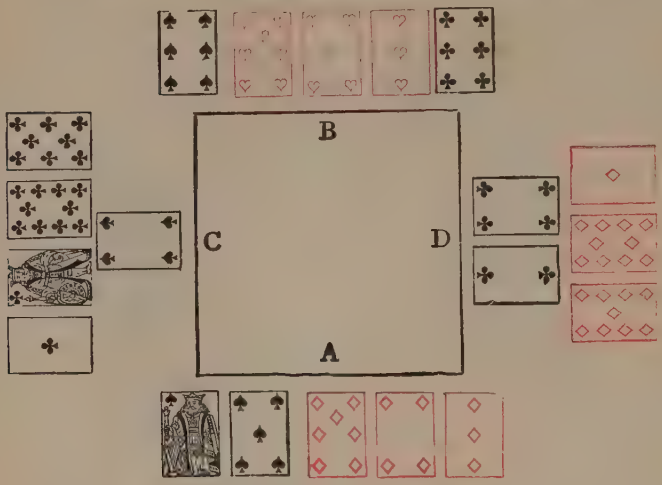
1.—B leads qu; D plays k; A plays 5; C plays 3.

A reads the probability of D holding the fourchette, and if he takes the king he may lead up to the kn, 9, and lose both tricks.

2.—D leads 9; A plays 10; C plays 4; B plays 7.

A underplays here and reaps full advantage gained by holding up the first round.

Ending 25.—Taking the Force with a High Trump, that You May Return a Small One to Let Partner In.



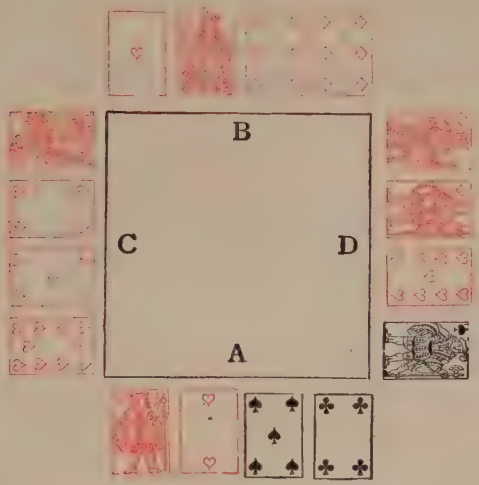
(Spades trumps—C leader.)

B is marked with the 6 s, and the long hearts; C has the clubs; D the diamonds. Unblocking plays a prominent part in end-play. Many a trick is thrown away by partner not getting out of the way, in both plain suits and trumps.

1.—C leads ace c; B plays 6 c; D plays 2 c; A plays k s.

A trumps with the king and leads the 5, and A B take every trick. Had A trumped with the 5 he would have blocked B's game and lost two tricks—three if he drew the trumps.

Ending 26.—Unblocking Late in Hand to Make Good a Tenace in Partner's Hand.



(Clubs trumps—B leader.)

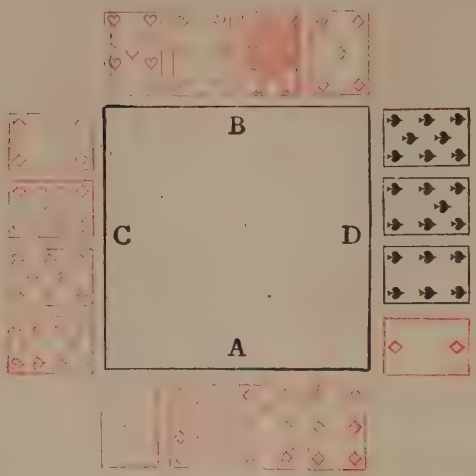
1.—B leads qu h; D plays 9; A plays kn h; C plays 4 h.

This unblocking on the part of A is very beautiful. It requires the nicest whist perception on the part of A and B to read the purpose of this brilliant stroke. A reasons that B must have a losing d, and probably a tenace in hearts over C; he must throw the kn, that he may later on lead through C's tenace (if there), giving B the *option* of taking with the *smaller* card, this he cannot do if he retains the kn, for, if C plays low, and B takes with ace, he is left with a losing heart; if he does not take, A is left with the losing spade.

2.—B leads 6 d; D plays k d; A trumps; C plays qu d.

3.—A leads 2 h; C plays 5 h; B plays 6 h; and A B have every trick. Had A thrown the 2 of hearts on the qu, a trick must have been lost.

Ending 27.—Unblocking.



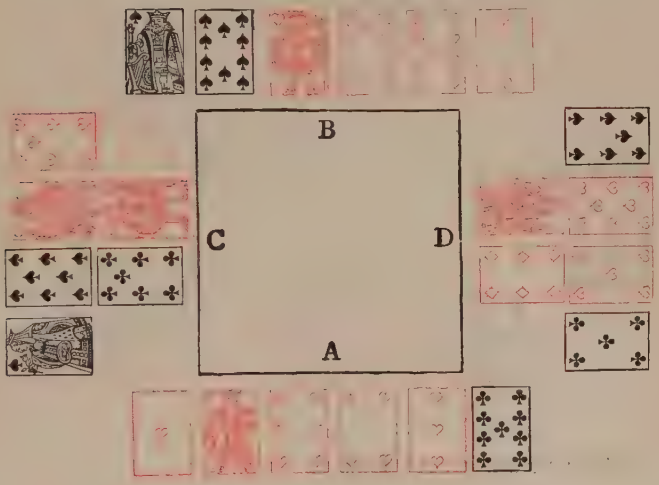
(Trumps out—A leader.)

One round of d has been played—k, qu, 8, 3 falling; C is marked with the tenace in h over B; D has the long s; A the diamonds.

1.—A leads ace d; C plays 4; B plays kn; D plays 2 d. B's unblocking is clever; A B require every trick, and if B keeps the kn it must put him in, holding the losing hearts; if it turns out that the 10 d is with C, no loss results, for B then makes his 9 h. The point is that

A *must* hold the 10 d, or the odd is gone, and B plays as though he knew A held the 10.

Ending 28.—Unblocking Discard.



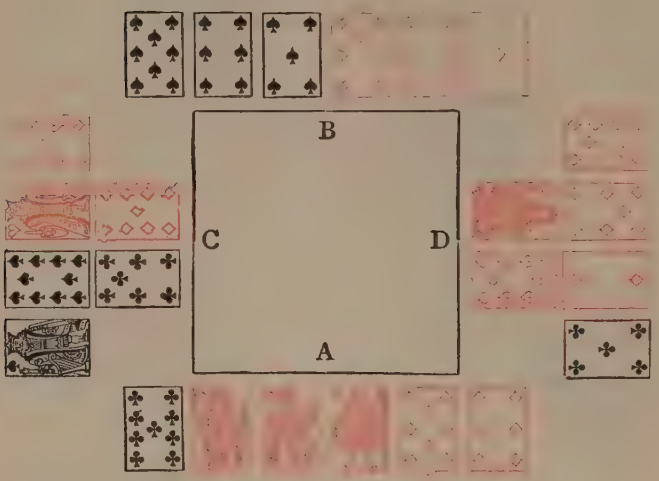
(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

A's suit must be h, and he is marked with five.

1.—A leads 9 c; C plays 7; B plays 9 h; D plays 5 c.

If B discards the 2 h, he must lose a spade trick to C. B might discard the 10 s, but the point illustrated is, that you must sometimes prepare to get out of the way of partner's assumed suit by an unblocking discard.

Ending 29.—Giving Partner Certain Cards, that he must Hold—to Win.



(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

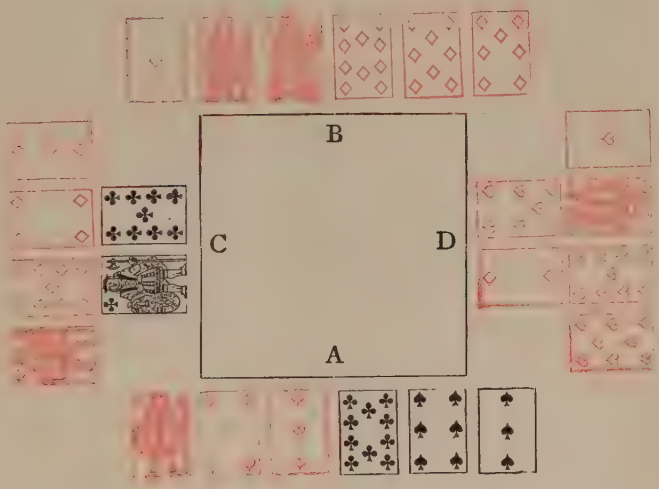
A is in and A B require every trick; the best spades and hearts are against, diamonds have not been led.

1.—A leads 9 c; C plays 7; B plays ace d; D plays 5 c.

B's discard of the ace of d is the only play; if he throws a s or h he loses four tricks. B reasons that A must hold the diamonds or the game is hopelessly lost;

if he retains the ace he blocks A's play of the suit, and besides must lead to sure defeat.

Ending 30.—Throwing the Lead.



(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

The hands can be counted.

1.—A leads 10 c; C plays 9 c; B plays 7 d; D plays 2 d.

This is beautiful work; A makes the best possible play, but C is equal to it, and very neatly counters on A by refusing to take. A hoped that C would seize the instant trick, if he had he would have lost a trick.

2.—A leads 6 s; C plays 3 d; B plays 8 d; D plays 7 h.

C very cleverly refuses to take the force; if he does he vitiates the merit of the former play and loses two tricks.

3.—A leads 3 s; C plays 4 d; B plays 10 d; D plays 8 h.

C again passes—to trump would still lose two tricks.

4.—A leads a heart which C again passes, D takes and makes his ace of h and C the last trump, and A B have but three of the six tricks. This ending offers a remarkable illustration of the possibilities of the game. By the best possible play all around the score in these six tricks is A B 3; C D 3. Now, suppose A had led a heart and then refused to trump at trick four—knowing he would be overtrumped—the score would then be A B 0; C D 6. If he trumps the heart at fourth trick, the score is then A B 1; C D 5. Again: If A leads the s, which, by the way, compels C to play a very pretty coup:—

1.—A leads 6 s; C plays kn c (!); B plays 7 d; D plays 2 d.

2.—C leads the losing trump, and—A B 2; C D 4.

Suppose, however, that C misses the coup:—

1.—A leads 6 s; C plays 9 c; B plays 7 d; D plays 2 d.

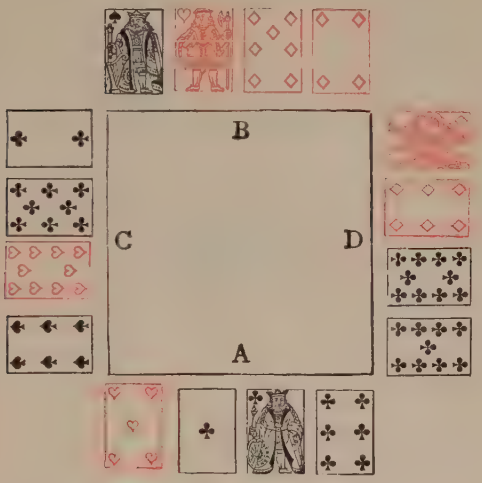
2.—C plays kn c; B plays 8 d; D plays 8 h; A plays 10 c.

3.—C must now lead a d, and—A B 4; C D 2.

Once more:—

1.—A leads 6 s; and C, giving B the 10 c, trumps with the kn c, and then leads a d in the hope of making the 9 c, then A B 5; C D 1; and we have all the possible scores from A B 0; C D 6; to A B 5; C D 1.

Ending 31.—Taking the Lead from Partner.



(Hearts trumps—C leader.)

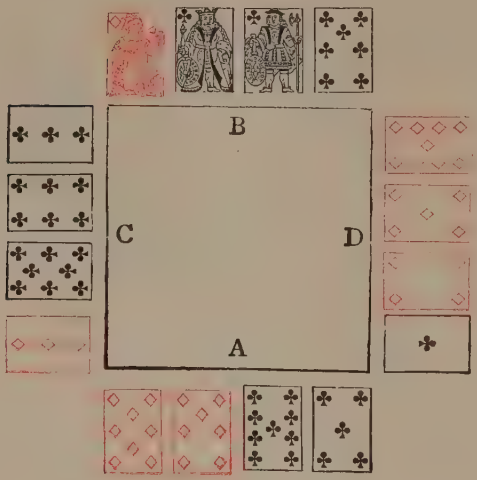
B is marked with kn h, k s and two diamonds; D with the best d and no trump.

1.—C leads 6 s; B plays k s; D plays 9 c; A trumps.

A trumps his partner's trick that he may lead the winning clubs. C led the losing spade to place the lead with B, knowing he had the k, but he should have led the losing trump and thus prevented A from making the clever little stroke of trumping the trick already won by

partner. It is often best to lead the losing trump, and especially so when it draws two for one.

Ending 32.— Clearing up Partner's Suit.



(Trumps out—A leader.)

Here is a position of frequent occurrence, both in the

endings and the middle hand. It is a fine point, and is very often missed by even good players. It is reduced here to a simple ending, but, as before stated, the point illustrated often turns up early in the play of the hand. In the above position B opened the hand with the 10 c, thus showing the k, kn and others. The 10 lost to the qu, leaving the ace yet in. A, to make the suit, eventually led trumps, and succeeded in exhausting them. A is in the lead at this point. You should, in all such situations as A is in here, lead to *clear up the suit* for partner. If you open a fresh suit, or lead anything else, you may take from partner his only card of re-entry, and the suit you have played for may not make. It matters not whether you know anything about your partner's hand in the other suit or suits, you must not take the chance of forcing his only re-entry card before you clear up his suit.

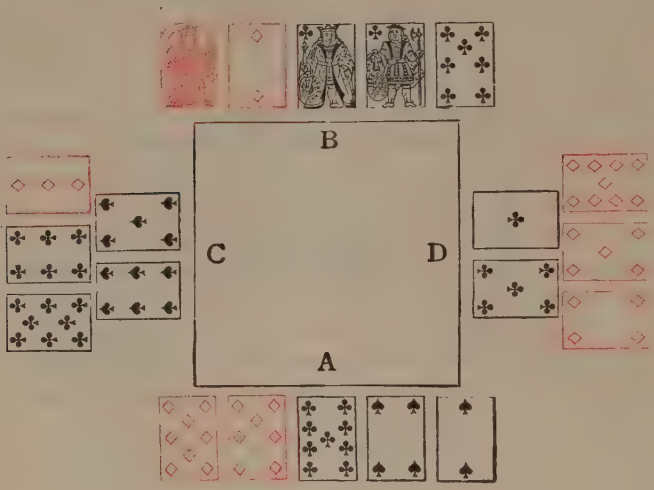
1.—A leads 9 c; C plays 3; B plays 7; D plays ace.

D must now lead a d, and B makes the clubs. If on the other hand—

1.—A leads 8 d; C plays 3 d; B plays qu d; D plays 4 d.

B must now lead a club, and will not take another trick. The point, as illustrated here, is very simple, yet it is often missed. You note that if you are playing in the position of either C or D, you adopt the very line of play A is to avoid. The point to be remembered is—be careful to establish your partner's suit, by leading it, before you lead a suit that may force the play of his only card of re-entry. This suggests another point which is illustrated in the following example:—

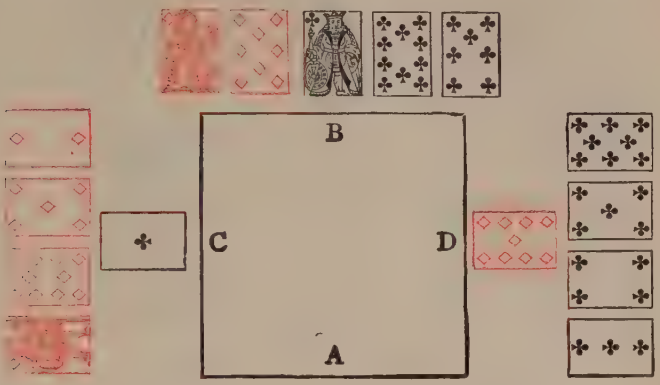
Ending 33.—Keeping Command of Opponents' Suit.



(Trumps out—A leader.)

1.—A leads 9 c; C plays 6 c; B plays 7 c; D plays 5 c. D very properly refuses to play the ace—to clear up B's suit, and A is now forced to go on with a d, and B's clubs cannot make. Had D parted with command he would have lost a trick. B should have covered A's 9. Then, if D refuses to take, B goes on with the suit, forcing D to take, and B must make his long club. Here is another phase involving the same principle:—

Ending 34.—Forcing the Adversary to Clear Up Your Suit.



(Trumps out—D leader.)

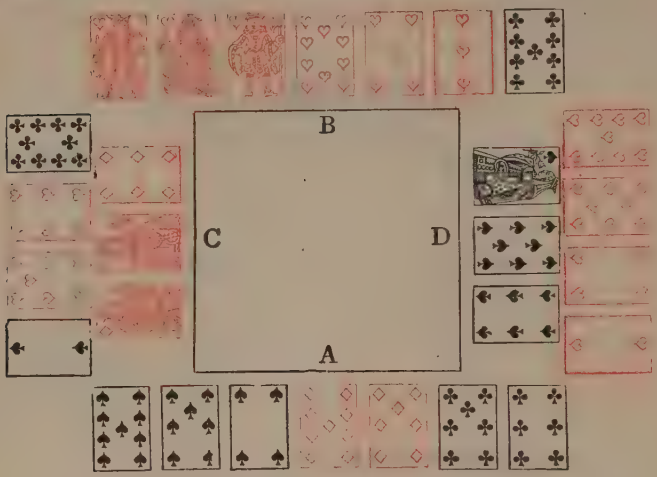
You are sometimes placed in the position of B in the above ending, and you must refuse to part with your only re-entry card.

1.—D leads 9 d; C plays 2; B plays 8.

B can read D's hand, and knowing that he must now lead a club—thus forcing him to clear up the suit—he, of course, refuses to part with the qu d. If he puts up the qu he loses every other trick. C should have covered D's 9 d with the 10, thus preventing B from playing the coup. In whist, brilliancy on the part of one player is often rendered possible only through weak play on the part of the other. As:—

1.—D plays 9 d; C plays 10 d, and now, whether B takes or passes, he can make but one trick of the five.

Ending 35.—Leading Up to a Double Tenace in Trumps.



(Spades trumps—A leader.)

Here is a beautiful ending (*see* illustrated hand No. 11), in which the leader (A) leads up to a double tenace in trumps, and purposely loses three tricks in trumps that he may make good four tricks in his partner's hand. To lead up to a double tenace proclaimed against you would, under most circumstances, be the worst possible play; but the resources of whist are so varied, that some times the best thing to do is to force the opponent to take the lead, by leading up to his tenace in such a manner that he cannot escape the lead at the critical point in the play. A can count the hands in the above ending, and needs four tricks to make the game.

1.—A leads 7 s; C plays 2 s; B plays 3 h; D plays 8 s.

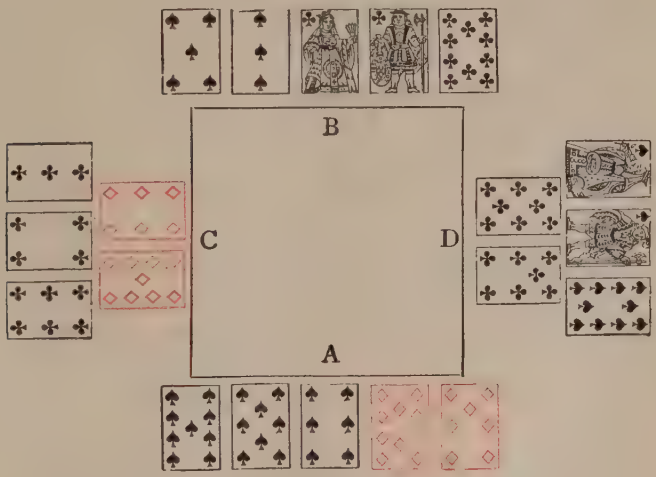
If A leads a c, d or the 4 of spades, he loses the game. The club or diamond loses two tricks, the 4 s three

tricks; for, if A leads the 4 s, D takes with 8, and plays qu, then puts A in the lead again with the 6 s, and A B do not take another trick. Even the 7 s is led in preference to the 9 s, as it offers D a triple opportunity to blunder, which the 9 s does not; for, if D takes with the qu, and leads the 6 or the 8, or if he takes with the 8 and leads the 6—with the idea of, in this way, avoiding the lead—he loses, in each case, a trick.

2.—D leads qu s; A plays 9 s; C plays 6 h; B plays 9 c.

D must lead the qu s; any other lead loses a trick. A must throw the 9 s or lose the game. D is powerless, he must lose the four tricks in hearts to B. A's play in this ending is very beautiful and instructive.

Ending 36.—Forcing the Opponent to Play a Coup or Lose the Game.



(Diamonds trumps—A leader.)

A knows that C has the minor tenace in trumps and three losing clubs; B is marked with the best clubs; D the best spades. Each has four tricks in, and the score is: A B, 5; C D, 6. A realizes that the game is lost, but, that he can force C to play a coup to gain it; he, therefore, takes the only chance, and trusts to C missing the coup.

1.—A leads 10 d; C plays 6 d; B plays 3 s; D plays 7 c.

Any other card led by A gives C the game by simple play.

2.—A leads 7 d; C plays 9 d; B plays 5 s; D plays 8 c.

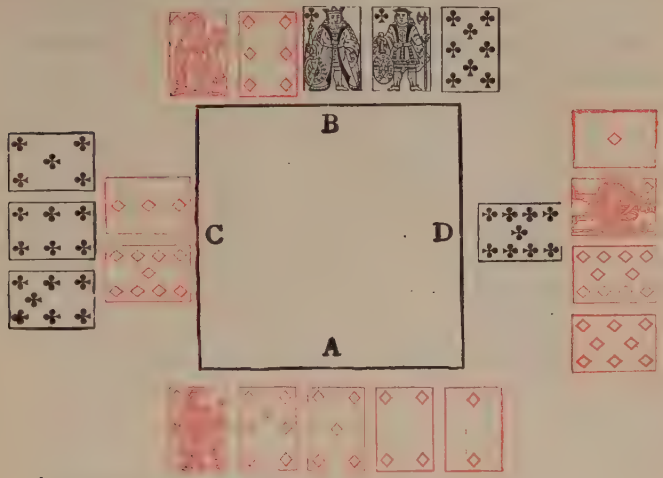
C must now lead a club, and A B have two by card and the game. C missed a pretty coup—and with it the game, as:—

1.—A leads 10 d; C plays 9 d; B plays 3 s; D plays 7 c.

2.—A leads 7 d; C plays 6 d; B plays 5 s; D plays 8 c.

A must now lead a spade, and C D have the odd card and game. The coup that C missed is very neat, and the student is cautioned to be on the alert for such clever plays.

Ending 37.—The Deschapelles Coup.



(Trumps out—A leader.)

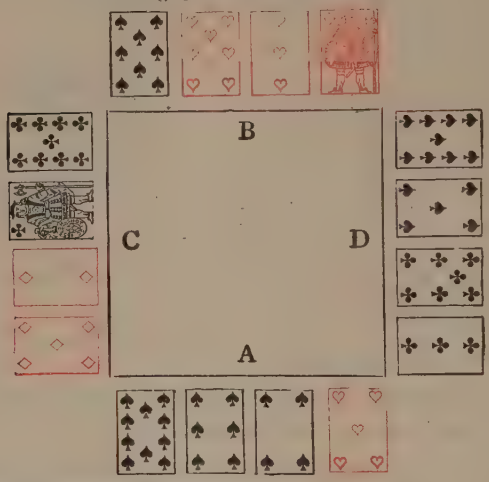
This bright stroke, the invention of the great Frenchman, is very pretty. This coup consists in leading the king, or other high card not the best in the play, at the head of others, for the purpose of making a smaller card in partner's hand good as a card of re-entry. If a small card is led, in such situations, it may force the play of partner's only card of re-entry, which may lose to a higher card fourth hand—to the loss of several tricks. In the above position the best clubs (k, kn) are marked with B; A is in, he has no club to give B, and his object is to get B in that the clubs may make. Diamonds have not been led.

1.—A leads k d; C plays 3 d; B plays 6 d; D plays ace d.

B's qu d is now good. It is hardly necessary to state that if you suspect the coup, you will hold up the winning

card and not part with control the first or second round of the suit. In this example D should have refused to part with the ace until the second round, in which event B could not have brought in his clubs.

Ending 38.—Grand Coup.



(Spades trumps—C leader.)

A has a trump too many. The grand coup consists in getting rid of it. This appears paradoxical, but it is true that you sometimes find yourself with a superfluous trump, on the same principle that you often have a high card that you must throw away in order to avoid taking the lead.

1.—C leads kn c ; B trumps ; D plays 3 c ; A under-trumps.

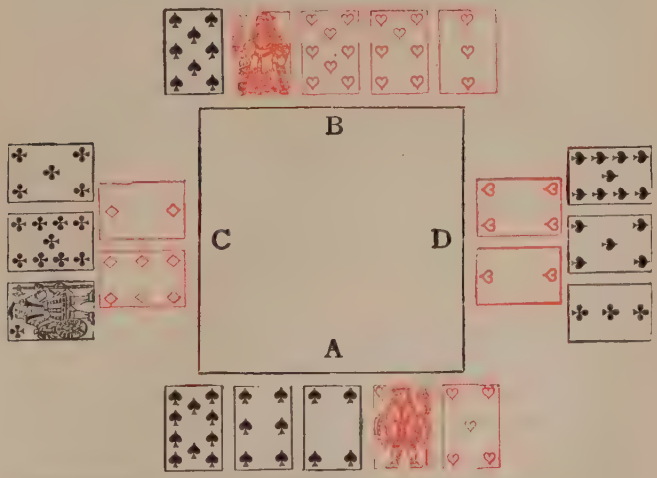
A throws the 4 s, and not the small heart; if he does not, and D properly refuses to trump the kn d next led by B—he loses a trick, as :—

1.—C leads kn c; B trumps; D plays 3 c; A plays 5 h.

2.—B leads kn d; D plays 7 c; A must trump—and D's 9 s must make.

The opportunity to play this splendid coup is often missed and as often rendered impossible by not forseeing it in time to prepare for it. It is particularly beautiful when anticipated several tricks in advance and the superfluous strength gotten rid of at the earliest opportunity, for, if you miss a chance to part with the unnecessary trump—you may find no other. You must not forget that if you hold any high card with which you will be forced to take the lead, you will be in the same predicament as though you had not successfully thrown the superfluous trump. Your object is to avoid the lead, and any card that will compel you to take the lead, will, of course, obstruct your purpose. Suppose the following:—

Ending 39.—Grand Coup and Throwing High Card Combined.



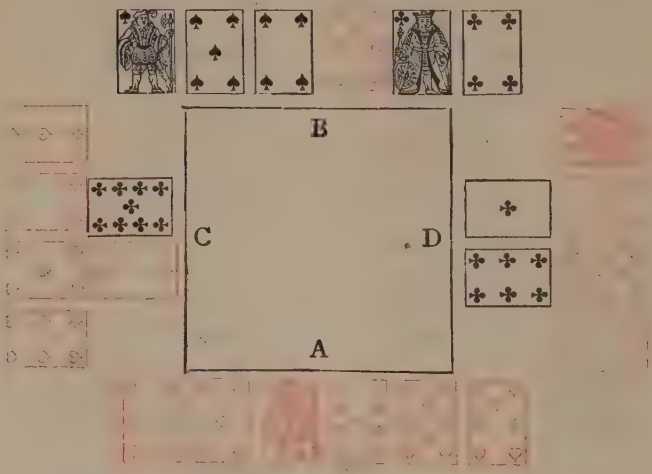
(Spade trumps—C leader.)

1.—C leads kn c; B trumps; D plays 3; A throws his superfluous trump.

2.—B leads qu h; D plays 2 h; A plays kn h; C plays 9 c.

A must throw the kn h or lose a trick, for, if he throws the 5 h, he must take the heart next led by B, and then lead up to D's tenace in trumps. A should throw the kn h to B's qu even if he does not know that B has the next best heart, for, if he finds the best heart with either D or C no harm is done, as in this event no play will escape the loss of one trick.

Ending 40.—Taking Partner's Trick in Order to Force the Last Trump from Adversary.



(Clubs trumps—C leader.)

Endings similar to the above may occur. B is marked

with the k of clubs (king being turned), also the best spades; A the best hearts; C the losing hearts.

1.—C leads 9 c; B plays 4 c; D plays 6 c; A plays 5 d.

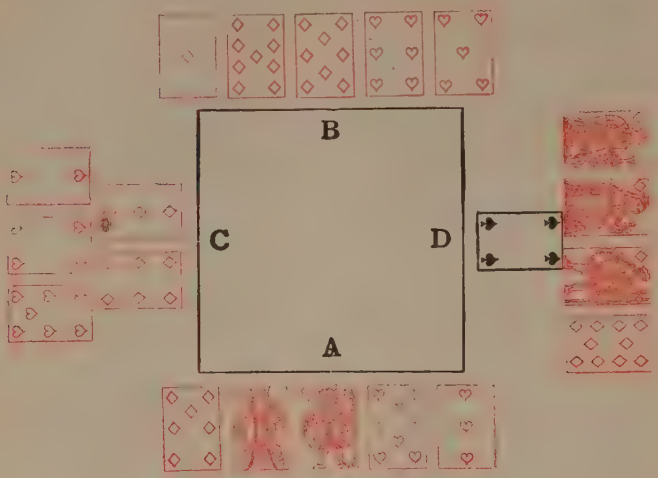
D's careless play of the the 6 c loses four tricks, for he can now make only the ace of c. If, on the other hand, he plays the ace he must make every trick but one—

1.—C leads 9 c; B plays 4 c; B plays ace c; A plays 5 d.

2.—D leads kn d; A plays 6 d; C plays 2 h; B plays 7 d.

D keeps up the diamonds, and B must take the force with his last trump; D takes the spade next led by B and makes the diamonds. Had D known that C had winning cards to lead, he should play the 6 c as he did do, but knowing that C must lead a losing card he should have taken the lead with the idea of forcing the last trump from B. In situations like this you should take the lead unless you are *sure* that partner has winning cards to lead, for the risk is too great to run. D, in the above example, by putting on the ace, made sure of every trick but one, and he should not have taken the chance of partner having a diamond to give him—unless he had to catch the king to save the game. The student will understand that when he is left with an established suit and *one* trump, and an opponent also an established suit and one trump, that it is of the utmost importance that he should have the lead at this critical point; if he has not the lead he will not make his suit. In such situations the one who is first forced must lose.

Ending 41. — Refusing to Part with the Thirteenth Trump the First Round of Your Opponents' Suit.



(Spades trumps—A leader.)

D has the thirteenth trump; A the hearts established and marked in his hand. This is a situation of frequent occurrence. D in this position should not part with his last trump the first round of A's suit.

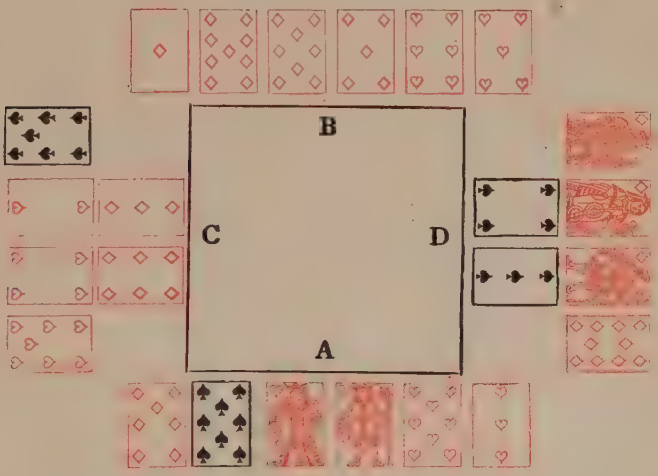
1.—A leads kn h; C plays 3 h; B plays 5 h; D plays 10 d.

If D trumps this trick he loses two tricks, for B will get in with his ace of d, and will have a heart to give back to A.

2.—A leads k h; C plays 4 h; B plays 6 h; D trumps. D can now trump and lead a d, which B takes and then must lead a d, and D's diamonds make. Go back a trick in this ending in order to illustrate the danger in

discarding too close in partner's great suit; one, or even two cards may not be enough if the thirteenth trump is left with the opponent—as the following ending demonstrates.

Ending 42.—Keep More than One Card of Your Partner's Great Suit—if the Thirteenth Trump is with the Opponents.

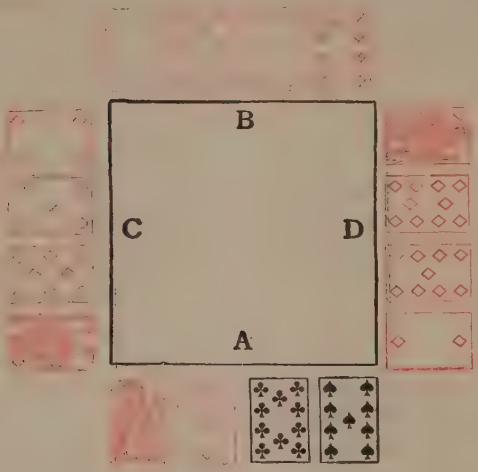


(Spades trump—A leader.)

1.—A leads 8 s; C plays 7 s; B plays 5 h; D plays 3 s. B loses a trick here by discarding the h, for D will now trump the heart next led by A, and A B will make only one trick in the suit. The student will readily see that if at trick 7 B discarded a h, he lost still another trick, for if B has *three*, D must hold up his thirteenth

trump until the *third* round of the suit, or A makes his hearts. All that B requires is his single re-entry card—the ace of diamonds—and he should discard the diamonds down to the ace and keep his hearts, so that A may make his suit either *before* or *after* D has used his last trump.

Ending 43.—Leading the Lowest of a Two-Card Suit that Partner may not be Tempted to Finesse.



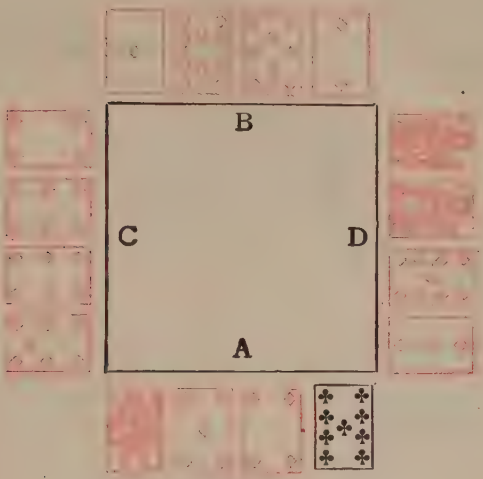
(Clubs trump—A leader.)

A has the last trump, the last spade, and the diamond suit has not been led.

1.—A leads 3 d; C plays 4; B plays ace; D plays 2. A here leads the lowest of two cards that B may put up his best card, had he led the qu it might have tempted B to finesse and a trick be lost.

2.—B now leads the winning heart, and A B score all four tricks.

Ending 44.—Finesse.



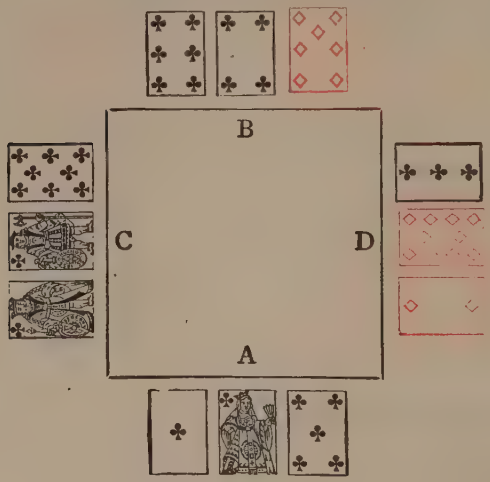
(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

Finesse is often obligatory in the ending of a hand. In the above example, A is marked with the last trump; C with the twelfth and thirteenth hearts, diamonds have not been led.

1.—A leads kn d; C plays 6 d; B plays 2 d; D plays qu. B must finesse the kn led by partner, although he knows, absolutely, that it must fall to either k or qu in D's hand. If B puts up the ace, he cannot take another trick, his passing preserves the perfect tenace, and he knows that D must return the suit. It is often evident

that a finesse must be gained to make the odd or save the game, and if your finesse loses in such situations, no play would win; if the finesse wins, you gain a trick that no other play would make. A finesse in situations of this character is obligatory.

Ending 45.—Avoid Making Your Adversaries' Minor Tenace a Major Tenace.



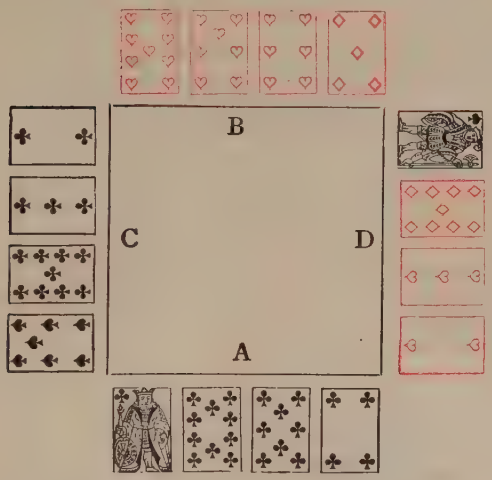
(Trumps out—A leader.)

Players in A's position often lead their best card, thus at once presenting C with a trick by making their own major tenace a minor one. C, in this instance, opened this suit with the 7, to which the 2, 9, and 10 fell, in the order named, and A could, of course, read C with the k, kn, 8.

1.—A leads 5; C plays 8; B plays 4; D plays 3.

If A leads either the ace or queen he must lose a trick. In such cases, when you hold a major tenace and a small card against a minor tenace and one small, lead the small card.

Ending 46.—Discarding a Trump.



(Hearts trumps—A leader.)

You may sometimes be placed in the position of D in the above example.

1.—A leads k c; C plays 2; B trumps; D discards a trump.

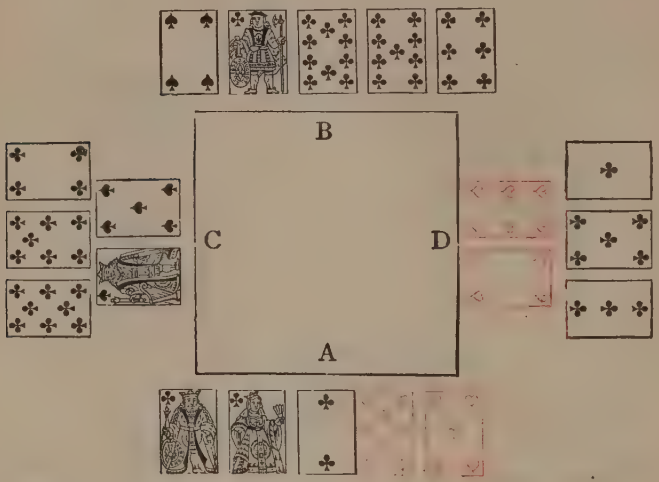
D being put to the discard, throws a losing trump, for B is marked with a losing spade or diamond—D is uncertain which; he knows that B will at once draw his trump in any event, and if he discards at random, he

may throw the wrong card, and lose a trick. The fall to the next trick may enable D to read B's remaining card.

2.—B leads 9 h; D plays 3 h; A plays 4 c; C plays 7 s.

C plays the twelfth spade here, and D now knows that B must hold the twelfth diamond, and to B's next lead of a trump D throws the kn s, and the 9 d makes.

Ending 47.—A Typical Case of Throwing High Cards to Avoid the Lead.



(Hearts trumps—D leader.)

Here is an illustration of an opportunity that frequently occurs for a coup. D is marked with the 6, 4 of trumps; clubs have not been led.

1.—D leads ace c; A plays qu c; C plays 4 c; B plays 6 c.

A anticipates in *time* the necessity of avoiding the lead, and throws the qu c. If he throws the 2 c he must, of

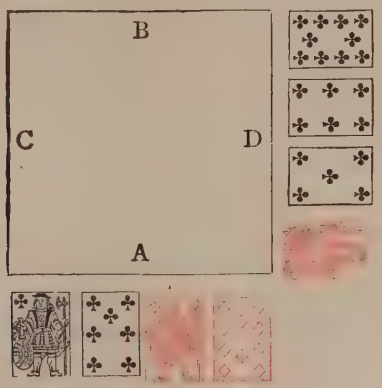
course, lose a trick. The student will keep in view the fact that with a tenace in trumps to your right, a trick *must be lost,* if you are in the lead at trick twelve. A cannot possibly lose by throwing the qu c here, for, if it turns out that C has the kn c, the trick that A loses in clubs is at once recovered in the trump suit. If, on the other hand, B has the best club, a clear trick is gained. This coup is a bright play for a probable gain, without the contingent of loss.

2.—D leads 5 c; A plays k c; C plays 7 c; B plays 9 c.

3.—A leads 2 c; C plays 8 c; B plays 10 c; D plays 3 c.

A must now make his tenace in trumps as the lead comes through D up to A.

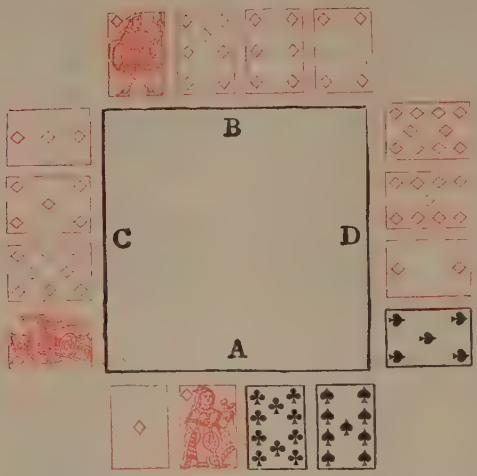
Ending 48.—Forcing the Opponent.



(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

A trick or more is often lost in this simple ending. A is left with kn, 7 of trumps and the best diamonds, and must force with the d or lose a trick, and D in turn must force with the heart or lose a trick.

Ending 49.—Playing as though a Suit could go but One Round.

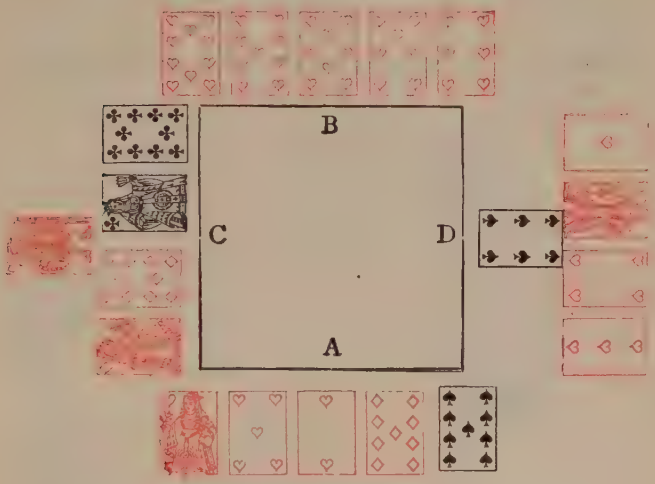


(Clubs trumps—A leader.)

A is marked with the best spade and the thirteenth trump. Diamonds have not been led. A is in the lead and endeavors to gain a trick by underplay.

1.—A leads qu d; C here should put up his king, for C can read that A may be underplaying—hoping to push the qu successfully through the king—if in second hand. It is A's only chance to gain a trick; if the king is with D it *must* make, if with B no play can lose. C should reason that he cannot make the king if the ace is with B, for, if C does not cover B finesses the queen and the king loses the second round. Playing second hand you should be on the alert for this bit of strategy on the part of the leader.

Ending 50.—Showing Hand by Discard, and Unblocking.



(Spades trumps—D leader.)

1.—D leads k h; A plays 2 h; C plays kn h; B plays 10 h.

The hands can be counted; D is marked with the 6 s and four hearts; C has two cards each of diamonds and clubs, and B must have the sequence of 6 to 10 in hearts and he throws the 10 h to warn A to get out of the way.

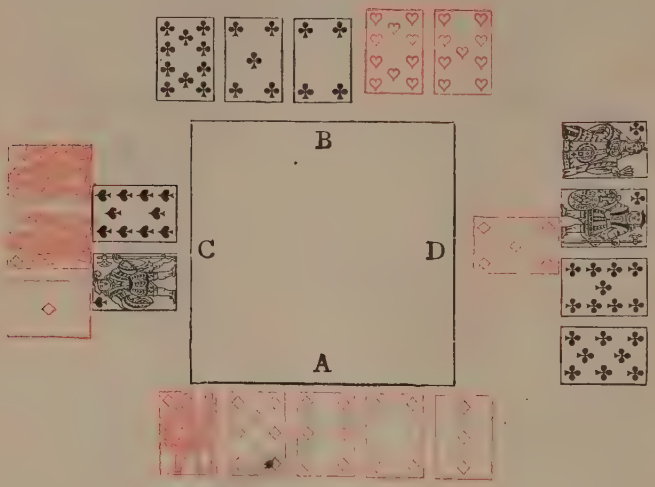
2.—D leads ace h; A plays qu h; C plays 10 d; B plays 6 h.

A throws the qu h unblocking in B's suit to avoid taking the lead, for if A gets the lead he must lose the 9 d to C.

3.—D leads 3 h; A plays 5 h; C plays 10 c; B plays 7 h.

B now leads the 9 h and A gets the needed discard.

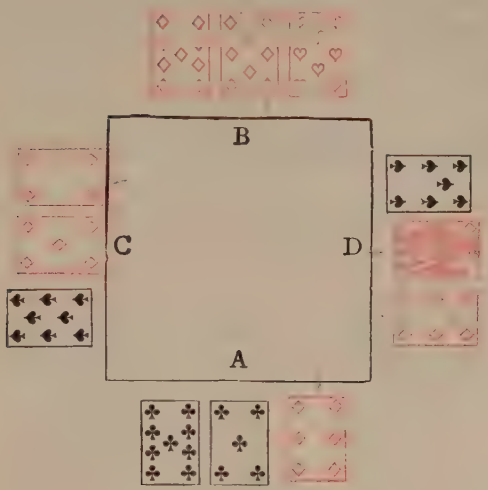
Ending 51.—Giving Partner a Chance to Overtrump.



(Clubs trumps—C leader.)

C can read the hands. A must have all d; D must have *one* d; and strength in clubs over B. C's spades and diamonds are all master cards; C is in the lead and must lead the spade or B will make a trick in trumps. If C leads the ace of d, B trumps, and D must follow suit and a trick is thrown away.

Ending 52.—Preventing the Opponents from Making their Trumps Separately.



(Spades trumps—A leader.)

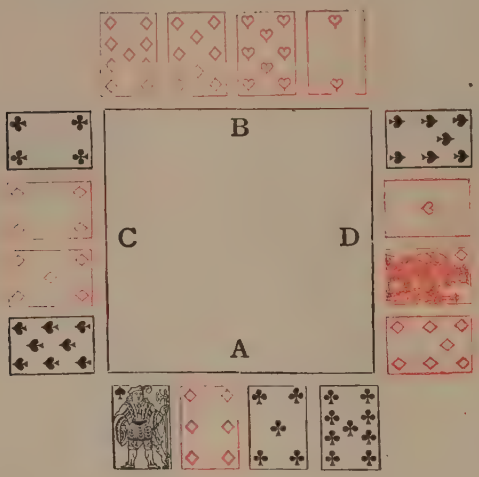
C led trumps to which D echoed, and consequently is marked with the 7 s, C the 8. A knows that D has the best d, possibly two winning d.

1.—A leads 6 d; C plays 4; B plays 8 d; D plays k d.

C and D cannot now make their trumps separately and B must make the 9 d. If A had led his long clubs he must have lost a trick. In all such positions you should avoid leading *forcing* cards, and, on the other hand, if you and partner each has a trump—the oppo-

nents out—you should endeavor to so play that you may not keep the same number of cards in the same suit. In the event of D in the above ending holding *two* winning diamonds A could not lose by the play, for in this event no play could save a trick. Go back a trick in the above ending and then—

Ending 53.—Making Your Trumps Separately.



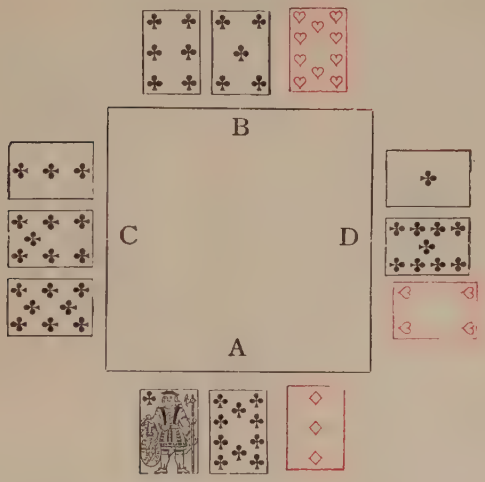
(Spades trumps—D leader.)

The hands can be read as before. A in this instance being marked with the kn s.

1.—D leads ace h; A plays kn s; C plays 4 d; B plays 2 h.

C, here, plays properly in discarding the diamond, if he throws the losing club he presents A with the opportunity of saving a trick as in Ending No. 52. A is now helpless as C and D's trumps must make separately.

Ending 54.—Refusing to Lead a Thirteenth.



(Hearts trumps—A leader.)

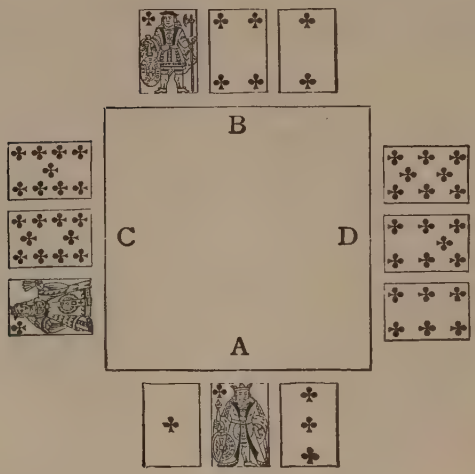
One round of clubs has been played—k, qu, 4, 2 falling—B is marked with the 10 h, D the 4 h.

1.—A leads kn c ; C plays 3 c ; B plays 5 c ; D plays a c.

A must now make the 10 c and B the trump. If A had led the thirteenth d, D must make two tricks. In such situations A should lead the suit even if the proba-

bilities are that he will lose both tricks in it, for the thirteenth *must* let the losing trump make.

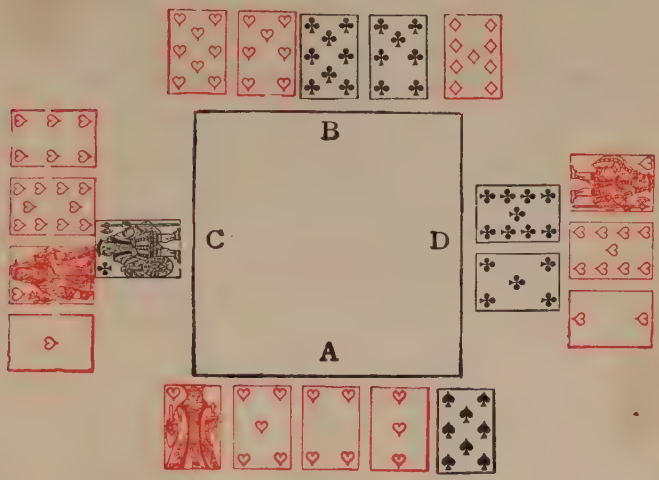
Ending 55.—Taking the Only Chance.



(Trumps out.—A leader.)

This suit has not been led; C has discarded the 5, A is to lead and requires every trick to make the odd; he should, of course, lead the trey, as the only chance. If the qu is with D the game is gone; if with B any play wins, but if with C it is the only play to win. C, in the above ending, should put up the qu, for if his partner has an honor in the suit—even the kn, his 10 must make, and if D does not hold an honor, the qu will not make if held up, as B would be most likely to finesse holding ace, kn or k, kh.

Ending 56.—Playing as at Double Dummy.



(Hearts trumps—D leader.)

It is known that A has four trumps and the thirteenth spade, B must have two trumps, two losing clubs and the last d. Trumps have not been led; D is in the lead, and C D require every trick to make the odd.

1.—D leads kn h; A plays 3 h; C plays 10 h; B plays 7 h.

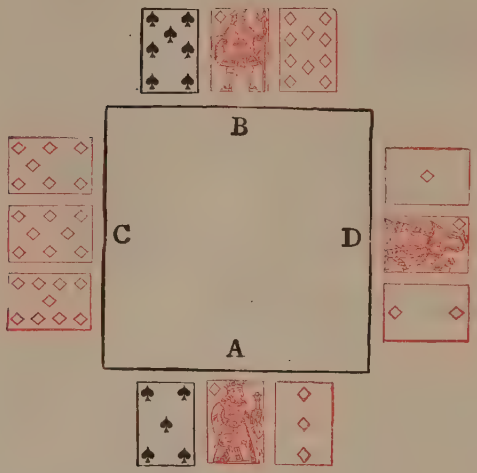
The 10 h by C is very clever play. If B has either the k or 9 of hearts the game cannot be saved. C knows nothing of the position of the k, 9 or 8 of hearts, but he does know that if B has either k or 9 or if A has k, 8 h, no play will save the game. The kn h must win and be followed by the 9 or the game is gone. C plays as

though at double dummy and throws the 10 h that he may not take the lead a trick too soon.

2.—D leads 9 h; A plays 4 h; C plays 6 h; B plays 8 h.

3.—D follows with 2 h; C wins; draws the k and the kn c makes, and C D have the odd card and game.

Ending 57.—Double Dummy No 2.



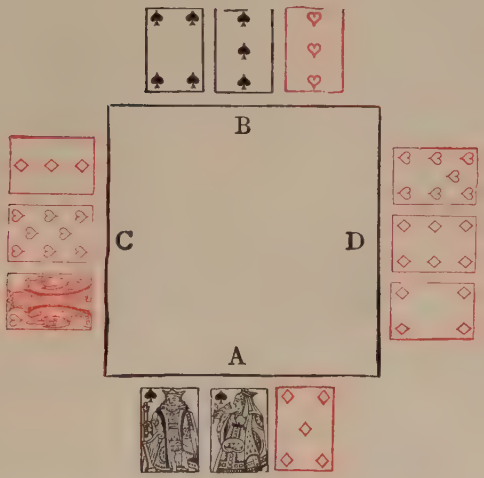
(Spades trumps—A leader.)

Diamonds have not been led. B is marked with the 7 s; A B require two tricks to make the odd.

1.—A leads 5 s; C plays 7 d; B plays 7 s; D plays 2 d. A must now make k d and the game. Had A led a d, C D win the game. If the hands of C and D are ex-

changed, then no play will win, and if B has either ace or qu, then any play wins. A's only play is the trump, and trust to finding the ace (if against) with D.

Ending 58.—Overtrumping Partner.



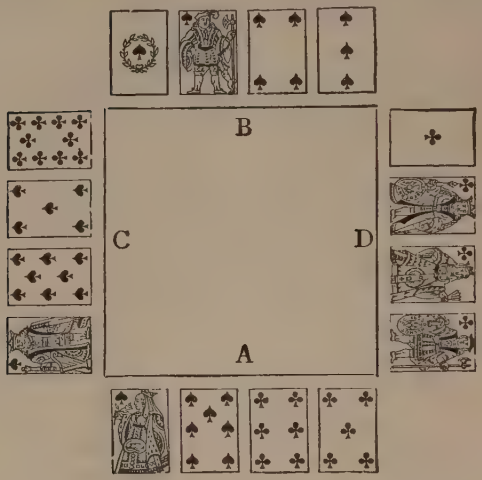
(Diamonds trumps—A leader.)

The hands can be counted; C echoed to D's lead of trumps and must have the 3; D is marked with two trumps and a heart.

1.—A leads k s; C trumps; B plays 3 s; D plays 7 h.

A must now make the small trump. A leads the k s to induce C to trump, trusting that D would miss the chance of overtrumping. C's business was to make it easy for D by throwing the heart, forcing D to trump, and draw the trump from A.

Ending 59.—Sticking to Rule.



(Trumps out—A leader.)

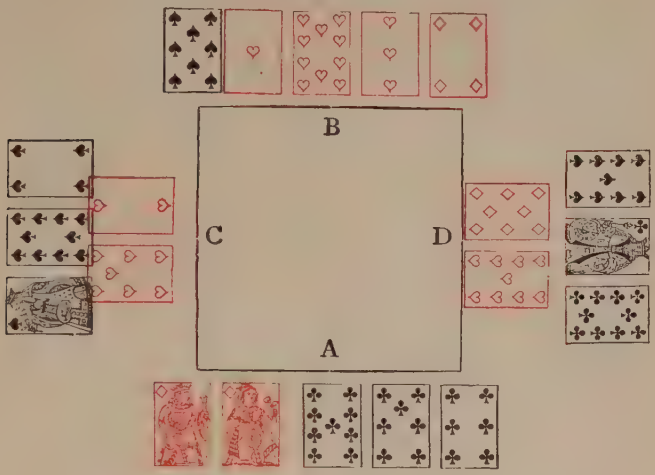
D has discarded the 10, 9, 6 of s.

1.—A leads qu s; C plays 5; B plays 3 s; D plays ace c.

2.—A leads 7 s; C plays 8 s; B plays kn s; and C D have not a trick.

C stuck to the rule, here, of not covering an honor with an honor, and throws away two tricks; had he covered he must have made his 8 s and a club trick. Careless second-hand play in the ending not infrequently loses a trick or more. It was C's business to cover the qu, even if he did not know that D had discarded the 10, 9, for if B has the ace he is sure to finesse, and by C's covering he will eventually make the kn, 10 or 9, for D, if with him.

Ending 60.—Trumping with the Middle Card.



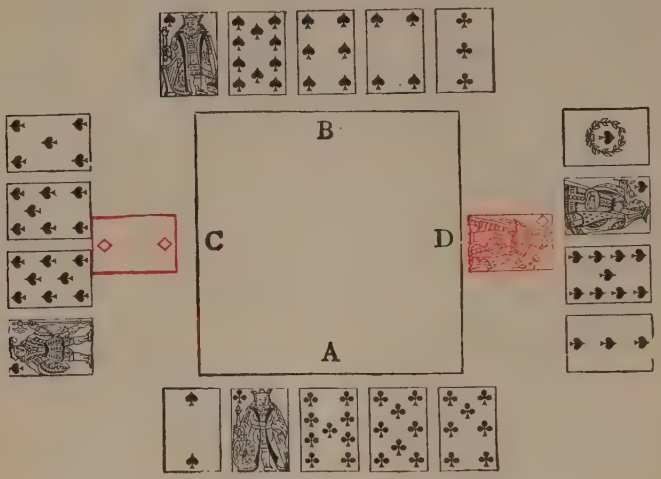
(Spades trumps—A leader.)

C knows that B has the hearts; D the best c; A the winning d.

1.—A leads k d; C plays 10 s; B plays 4 d; D plays 8 d.

C very judiciously trumps with his middle trump. C D require every trick, and C's only chance is to trump with his middle trump, and lead the small, finding D with the 9 s. To trump with the 4 s, loses a trick. A player holding three trumps, the opponents out or partner marked with the second-best, should always trump with his middle trump, reserving the option of throwing the lead to partner, with his lowest trump, later on, if expedient.

Ending 61.—Injudicious Discarding.



(Trumps out—D leader.)

Spades have not been led. Two rounds of clubs have been played.

1.—D leads qu d; A plays 2 s; C plays 2 d; B plays 3 c.

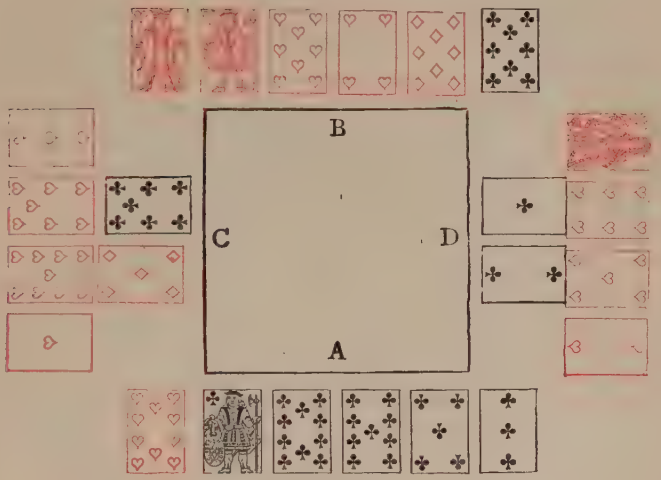
A and B's discards are ill-judged. B, of course, should have thrown the 4 s, as he must get in on s and his partner is marked with the best clubs. A should have thrown the c as it is evident that he cannot make them all, and he should not expose his hand, thus subjecting B to the adverse finessing of D.

2.—D leads 3 s; A plays 7 c; C plays kn s; B plays k s.

B leads 4 s—and D, knowing A is void, simply covers with the 9 s and A B have but one trick in the suit.

Had A discarded a c, and followed suit to the first round of spades, D must have played qu as the 10 s and the winning c might be with A, and the finesse would lose two tricks, a risk D would not run, unless he required every trick to save the game. Had A B discarded as they should, they must have made four of the five tricks.

Ending 62.—Discarding No 2.



(Diamonds trumps—B leader.)

Hearts have not been led—clubs one round.

1.—B leads 8 d; D plays 2 c; A plays 10 h; C plays 5 d.

2.—B leads 4 h; D plays 2 h; A plays 3 c; C plays 7 h.

A's discard of the 10 h was bad. While it is true that the 10 h was not *likely* to make a trick or even help to

make a trick for B, yet it was *certain* that A could not make all his clubs and he should have discarded the 3 c —retaining his 10 h in the hope that it would do just what, in this instance, it would have done—force a high card from C. As:—

1.—B leads 8 d ; D plays 2 c ; A plays 3 c ; C plays 5 d.

2.—B leads 4 h ; D plays 2 h ; A plays 10 h ; C plays ace h.

The 10 h forces the ace h, and A B have three tricks —a gain of a trick. Toward the end of a hand it is folly to hold on to a long suit, when it is evident that it cannot make entire, for even a card like the 10 or 9 of another suit *may* be of great use to partner, and to discard all your suits and keep only the one long one, in such situations, is very injudicious.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ILLUSTRATIVE HANDS.

THE illustrated hands that follow are taken from actual play.

The players are supposed to follow the rules of play as laid down in this work.

The student who examines the hands, and draws his inferences from the fall of the cards, will find that the players do not always make the play the situation demands. But hands showing good, bad and indifferent play, with comments, are considered of more value than the illustration of prearranged hands.

Hand I.

A Neat Play for the Odd.

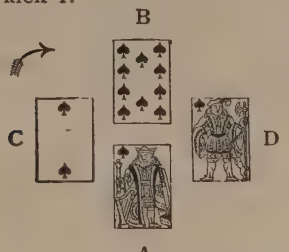
(Score: A B, 6; C D, 6. 2 c turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	ace, k, 9, 6, 5, 4	qu, 8, 7, 2	10	kn, 3
h	qu	k, 10, 4	kn, 9, 8. 7, 3, 2	ace, 6, 5
c	9, 8, 2	kn, 10, 5, 4	ace, k, 3	qu, 7, 6
d	ace, qu, 10	k, 4	kn, 6, 3	9, 8, 7, 5, 2

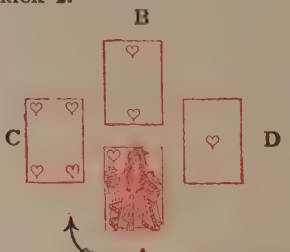
The Play.

Trick 1.



Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 0

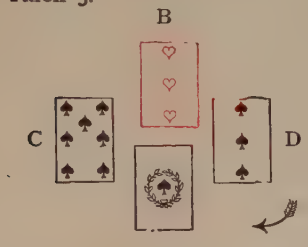
Trick 2.



Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 1

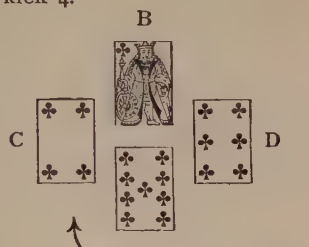
Trick 2.—A's position is difficult. He leads the qu h, assuming that if B has strength in any suit it must be in hearts. The d or s is out of the question, and he prefers the strengthening qu h to the trump.

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 2
C D, 1

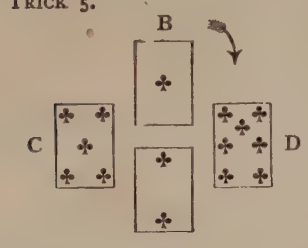
TRICK 4.



TRICKS { A B, 3
C D, 1

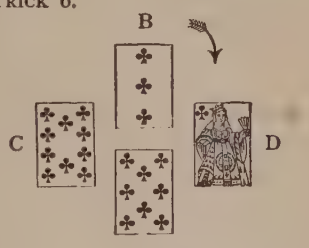
Trick 4.—A is in a dilemma, and he prefers the lead of a trump to forcing partner or opening from his diamond tenaces.

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 1

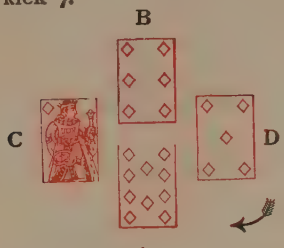
TRICK 6.



TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 2

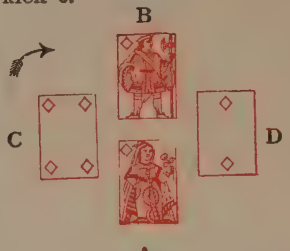
Tricks 5–6.—B knows that A has led trumps from three, possibly only two, but he reads him with strength in the other suits.

TRICK 7.



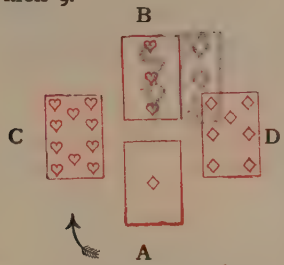
TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 3

TRICK 8.



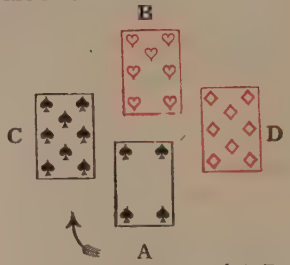
TRICKS { A B, 5 / C D, 3

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 3

TRICK 10.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 4

Trick 9.—The 10 h, by C, is a neat play. Had C trumped the ace, the game was lost. A must now lead to C's tenace in s.

Tricks 11–13.—C makes the remaining tricks, and C D score the odd card and game.

Remark.—C saved the game by clever end-play. Throwing the lead is at times very effective. Only by the lead of the 4 d (trick 8) and the discard of the 10 h (trick 9) could C make the game.

Hand II.

A Critical Ending.

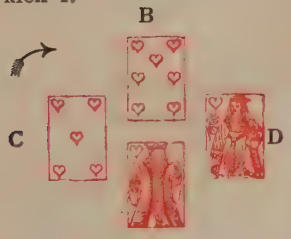
(Score: A B, 5; C D, 6. 3 c turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	qu, 10	k, 6, 5,	ace, 9, 8, 7, 2	kn, 4, 3
h	k, 4	9, 8, 6, 5	kn, 7	ace, qu, 10, 3, 2
c	10, 8, 6, 3	ace, k, kn	9, 7, 5, 4	qu, 2
d	ace, 10, 6, 5, 2	qu, kn, 4	k, 9	8, 7, 3

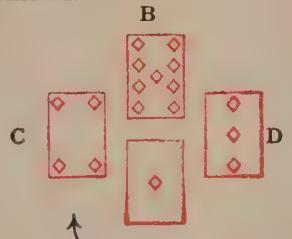
The Play.

TRICK 1.



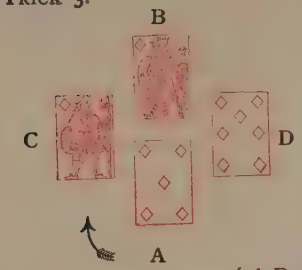
TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 0

TRICK 2.



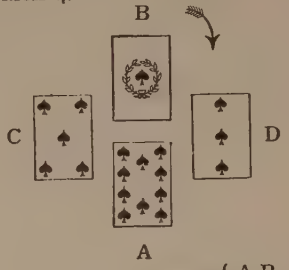
TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 0

TRICK 3.



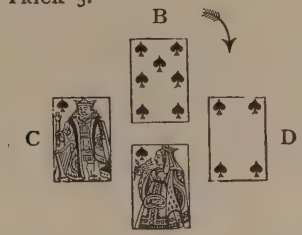
TRICKS { A B, 3
C D, 0

TRICK 4.



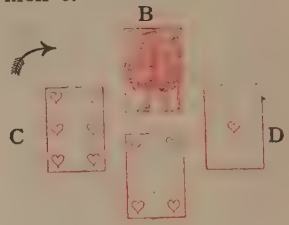
TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 0

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 1

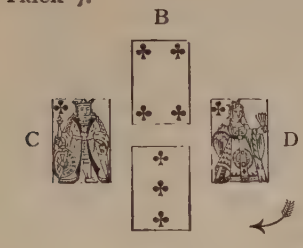
TRICK 6.



TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 2

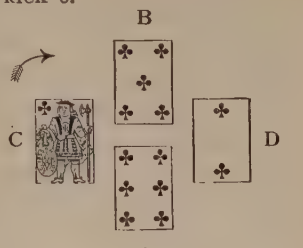
The play so far has been strictly conventional. The hand is very ordinary; but the simplest hands, and the most routine play, often bring out situations that demand careful and exact work. D reads that the trumps are probably nearly evenly divided; the hearts are established; he has the best spade, C most likely the qu d—it cannot be with B. B's hand is evidently either four spades and three trumps, or four trumps and three spades.

TRICK 7.



TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 3

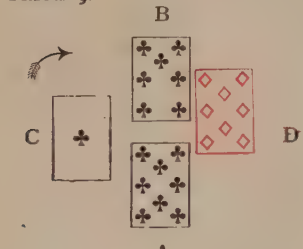
TRICK 8.



TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 4

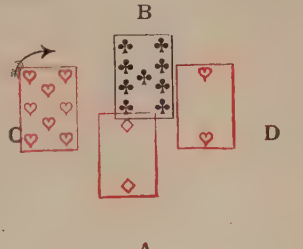
Trick 7.—D is justified in starting trumps, although he has but two.

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 5

TRICK 10.



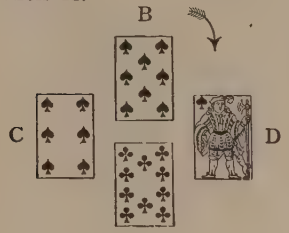
TRICKS { A B, 5 / C D, 5

Trick 10.—C here plays the only card to win the game. If he leads a s or d, he loses two tricks and the game. In this hand, as actually played, C led the qu d, and defended his play upon the ground that if he led a h, B would trump and A discard, and that B would

then lead a spade which A would trump—thus making their trumps separately.

But C did not go deep enough. When D at trick 9 discarded the 8 d, C could locate every card except the kn s. A must have the 10, 6, 2, d, and a trump; B three s and a trump; D three hearts and a s. B's spades may be the kn, 9, 2, or the 9, 8, 2; if the former, C D will not take a trick no matter how C plays. D *must* have the kn s or the game cannot be made or saved, and C should have played upon the assumption that D had the kn s, and, consequently, the heart is the only play. One of the opponents will trump and the other discard, whether C leads a h or d. But C should have played so that *both* their re-entry cards could not be trumped.

TRICK 11.



TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 5

TRICK 12.

TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 6

Trick 13.—D makes the h trick, and C D score the odd card and game.

Remark.—The above hand offers a good illustration of how completely at the mercy of the cards the best players may sometimes be, even against weak play. A B might have played their cards to score nine tricks.

Suppose A, at trick 2, leads a trump, a play for which there is no justification; C *must* win with one of his honors, and has nothing to do but go on with hearts; D wins with ace, and must then open either the s or d; if he selects the kn s as the card less likely to deceive or injure C, it is won by B, who returns the trump, and A B score three by cards—a difference of three tricks.

Hand III.

Compelling the Opponent to Play a Coup to Save the Game.

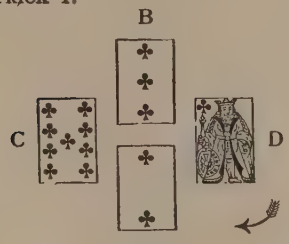
(Score: A B, 4; C D, 6. Ace s turned. D leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	qu, 10, 4, 3	kn, 8, 7, 5	ace, k	9, 6, 2
h	3, 2	kn, 7, 6, 5	ace, k, qu, 8, 4	10, 9
c	8, 7, 2	kn, 10, 9	6, 4, 3	ace, k, qu, 5
d	k, 9, 3, 2	qu, 6	ace, 5, 4	kn, 10, 8, 7

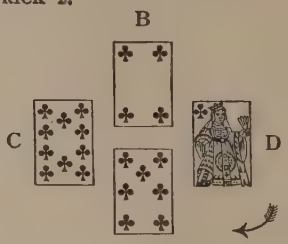
The Play.

Trick 1.

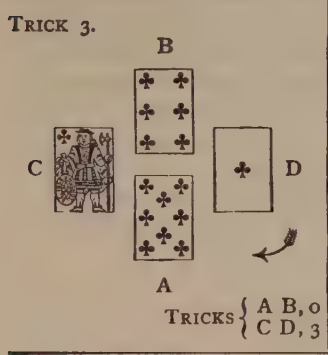


Tricks { A B, 0 / C D, 1

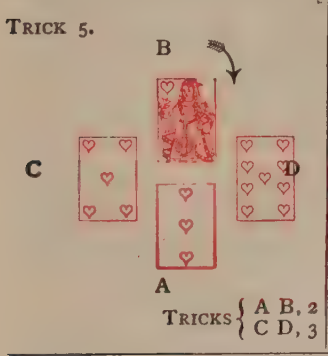
Trick 2.



Tricks { A B, 0 / C D. 2



Trick 3.—D goes on with clubs, hoping to profit by C's discard, as he is the one most likely to be void. But D's better play would have been his fourth-best d, retaining the ace of clubs as a probable useful card of re-entry.

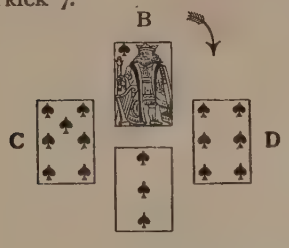


Trick 5.—A begins a late call; B may have the hearts well in hand, and if A can have a d come through D, A will make two tricks in the suit. Besides, B has the ace turned, and if the second round of trumps should fall to

C, the position is in A's favor, as C must then lead either a h or a d.

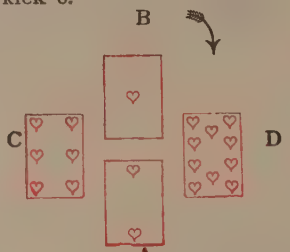
Trick 6.—The 2 h not falling (Trick 5), and the 9 h dropping from D, B deems it best to exact two rounds of trumps.

TRICK 7.



TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 3

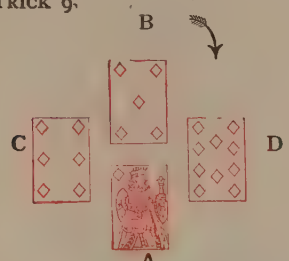
TRICK 8.



TRICKS { A B, 5 / C D, 3

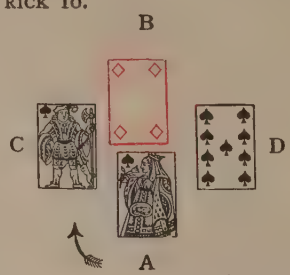
Trick 8.—B's lead of the ace h was ill-advised. (*See* remarks.)

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 3

TRICK 10.

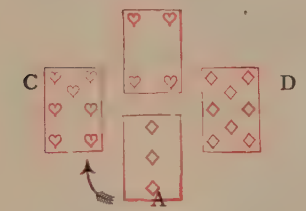


TRICKS { A B, 7 / C D, 3

Trick 10.—C plays a fine coup. The sacrifice of the kn s is the only way to save the game. C can read that

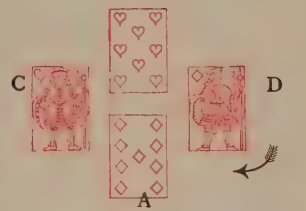
A is sure to follow with the losing trump, if C throws the 8 s. If C does not part with control, he must then lead a heart to sure defeat.

TRICK 11.



TRICKS { A B, 7
C D, 4

TRICK 12.



TRICKS { A B, 7
C D, 5

Trick 13.—A makes the 10 s, and A B score two by cards, and C D save the game.

Remark.—It not infrequently happens that a player must sacrifice a high card in the ending to avoid the lead. C saved the game, at trick 10, by throwing the kn. C was powerful only for harm, and had he played solely for his own hand, he could have taken *one* trick, but he would have lost *two* for his partner. C did not take a trick, but he made it possible for D to take *two* tricks that would have been lost except for his skillful work. There can be no real whist unless each player plans for the play of twenty-six cards.

B, by the lead of the ace h—trick 8—made it possible for C D to save the game. B should have led the 4 d. A was marked with two trumps, and B should have played to let A in, to draw the trumps. Besides, there was too much danger of doing just what B did—draw A's last heart. Furthermore, the risk of D trumping the ace h was great. Had B, at trick 8, led the d through D, A B must have made three by cards, and game.

Hand IV.

Departing from Rule.

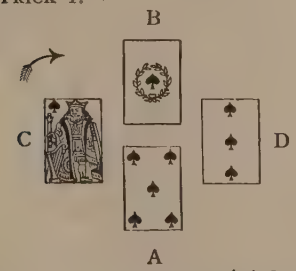
(Score: A B, 1; C D, 6. 4 h turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	5	k, qu, kn, 10	ace, 2	9, 8, 7, 6, 4, 3
h	qu, 9, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3	kn, 8	ace, 10, 2	k
c	kn, 6, 4	9, 8, 7, 2	k, 10, 5	ace, qu, 3
d	6, 5	9, 8, 3	ace, qu, kn, 7, 4	k, 10, 2

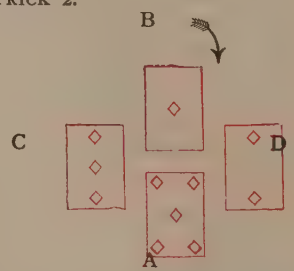
The Play.

Trick 1.

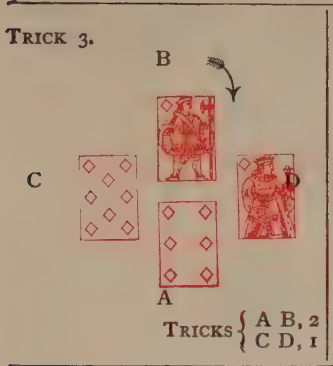


Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 0

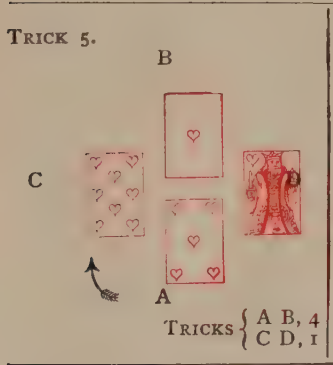
Trick 2.



Tricks { A B, 2 / C D, 0



Trick 4.—D has nothing better than to return his partner's suit. A did not call even though holding seven trumps. A ruffs with the 6—the fourth-best.

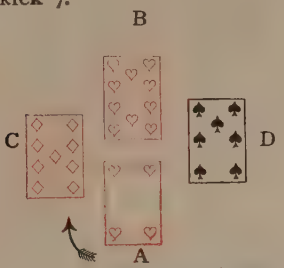


Trick 5.—A leads trumps for B's d, and shows three higher than the 6.

Trick 6.—B reads five trumps with A, yet in hand; D can have no more, and C but one. The return of the 2 h is the one bright play of the hand. The book play is to

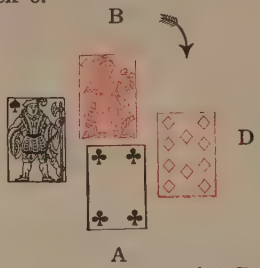
return the 10, the higher of two, but B sees the game—the qu h with A—if he can make the diamonds, and he trusts to A reading the play.

TRICK 7.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 1

TRICK 8.



TRICKS { A B, 7 / C D, 1

Trick 7.—A reads the situation. B must have the 10 h unless C is playing false, and even if C has the 10, it must make, and nothing is lost for, if C has the 10 h, A will trump the spades, when led, and lead B the strengthening kn c.

Tricks 9–13.—B brings in the diamonds, and A makes the long trumps, and A B score six by cards and game.

Remark.—A player is always justified in departing from rule when the situation demands it. Such play does not usually deceive partner or the opponents, for the previous fall of the cards is of such a character as to warrant all the players to suspect exceptional play; at least they draw inferences subject to the probability that the play may be irregular.

Hand V.

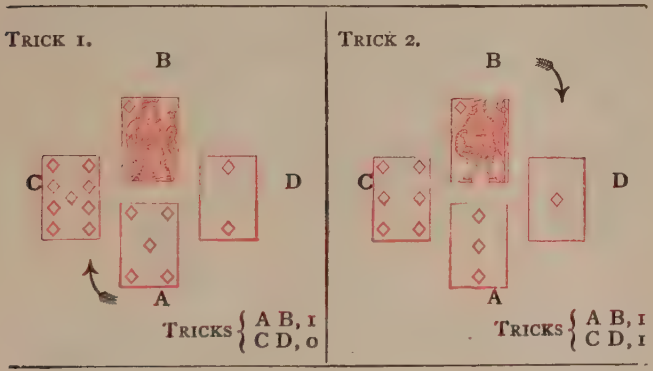
Anticipating a Call.

(Score: A B, 6; C D, 4. Kn s turned. A leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	qu, 5, 3, 2	ace, k, 10, 8	9, 4	kn, 7, 6
h	k, kn, 9	4, 2	ace, qu, 10, 8	7, 6, 5, 3
c	kn	ace, k, qu, 8, 4	10, 9, 7, 6	5, 3, 2
d	qu, 10, 8, 5, 3	9, 6	k, kn, 7	ace, 4, 2

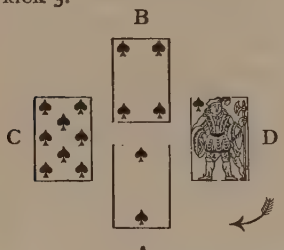
The Play.



Trick 1.—D refuses to take the k. C has played a suspiciously high card, and may be calling; if so, and B returns the suit, D, by playing the ace, will be in to answer the call. If B does not return the suit, C will be last player to any suit B may open, and D prefers this to taking the lead and opening a suit only 7 high.

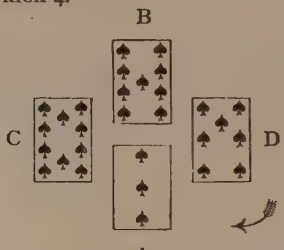
Trick 2.—B returns his partner's suit in preference to opening the double tenace in hearts. B can read that A has qu, 10, 8 d; D the 4 d. C completes the call.

Trick 3.



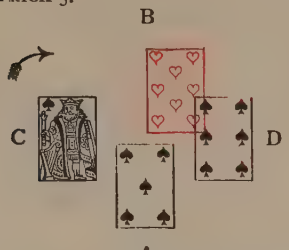
Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 2

Trick 4.



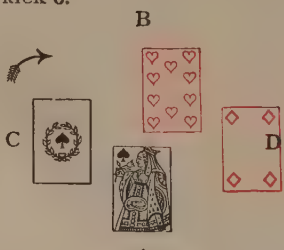
Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 3

Trick 5.



Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 4

Trick 6.



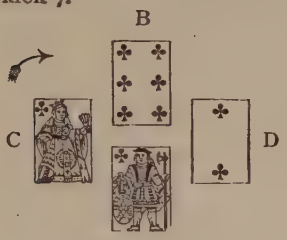
Tricks { A B, 1 / C D. 5

Trick 5.—B discards from his best protected suit. The object in this is very evident here. If B discards from the club suit he loses two tricks.

Trick 6.—B plays well by discarding another heart. C's suit must be clubs, and unless he has quart major, B

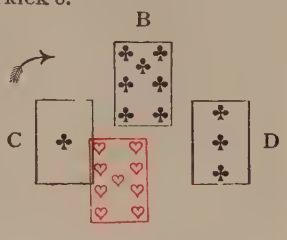
must make the 10 c. B must keep the d to give to A, as the k of h may be against.

TRICK 7.



TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 6

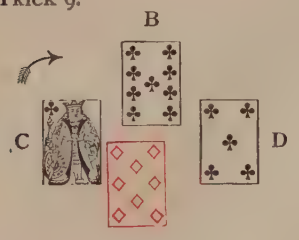
TRICK 8.



TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 7

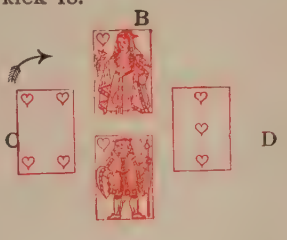
Trick 8.—A's discard of the 9 h is well judged. He reasons that B must have 10, 9, or 10, 8 of c, for if B held originally but three clubs, his second discard would (most likely) have been the 6 c and not the 10 h. But, aside from this negative inference, A can read that B *must* have two clubs remaining. He is marked with the ace, qu h only, the 7 d and two clubs.

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 8

TRICK 10.



TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 8

Tricks 11–13.—B makes the ace h, and 10 c; A the qu d, and C D score two by cards, and A B save the game.

Remark.—D's underplay to the first trick, and B's judicious discarding (Tricks 5 and 6) are worthy of note. The object in discarding from the best protected suit, when trumps are declared against, is very obvious in this instance. Had B weakened his club suit by a single discard, he rendered it worthless. Besides, when players can be depended upon to make the correct discards, the play is often very informatory. For example, B's discard of the 8 and 10 of h, marked him with the ace and qu of the suit, and A's discard (Trick 8) of the 9 h enabled B to read him with the k, kn h. It was immaterial whether A discarded the 9 h or the 8 d, at trick 8, as far as making tricks was concerned, but A knew that if he threw the 9 h, B could read his holding in the suit.

Hand VI.

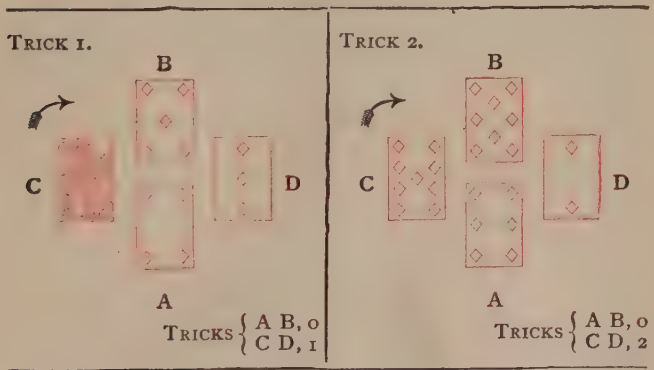
Holding Up.

(Score: A B, 6; C D, 0. 2 h turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	qu, 7	k, 8, 5	ace, kn, 4, 3, 2	10, 9, 6
h	ace, qu, 3, 2	10, 9, 8	5, 4	k, kn, 7, 6
c	6, 5	10, 9, 7	8, 4, 3, 2	ace, k, qu, kn
d	ace, k, 7, 6, 4	qu, kn, 10, 9	8, 5	3, 2

The Play.

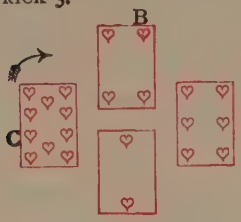


Trick 1.—A refuses to take the queen. (*See* Remarks.)

Trick 2.—C shows kn, 10 d only. D can read that A

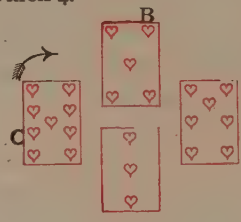
is holding up, and that he is probably strong in trumps, but he is forced to complete the call.

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 0 / C D, 3

TRICK 4.

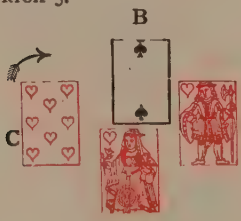


TRICKS { A B, 0 / C D, 4

Trick 3.—A still refuses to take. D does not echo as he reads A's play.

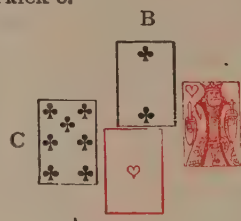
Trick 4.—D played without due consideration here; he should have put up the kn h, forcing A to take the lead.

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 4

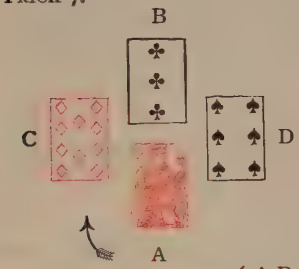
TRICK 6.



TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 4

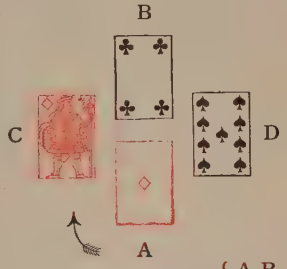
Trick 5.—C is also at fault here. He could read that if A was not holding up, he could have no more trumps. The four honors are yet in play ; D cannot have all four or he surely would have echoed, and B would certainly have covered the 9, holding any two of the honors four in suit.

Trick 7.



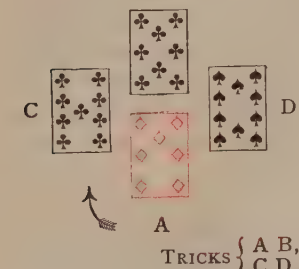
Tricks { A B, 3 / C D, 4

Trick 8.



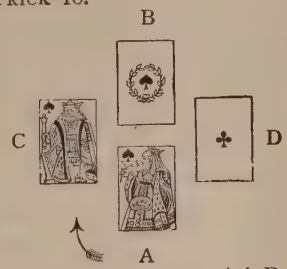
Tricks { A B, 4 / C D, 4

Trick 9.



Tricks { A B, 5 / C D, 4

Trick 10.

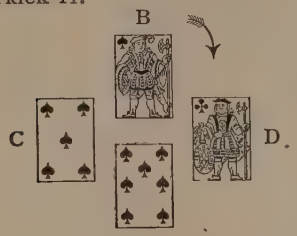


Tricks { A B, 6 / C D, 4

Trick 10.—A leads B the strengthening spade. C's cover is good; if he passes he loses two tricks. C, noting

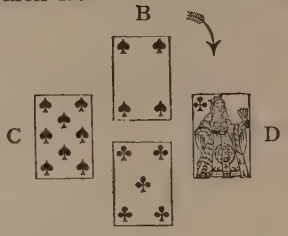
that D has discarded three spades—the 6, 9, 10,—sees that by putting up the k, he must make his 8 s.

TRICK 11.



TRICKS { A B, 7
C D, 4

TRICK 12.



TRICKS { A B, 7
C D, 5

Trick 13.—D makes his k c and A B score the odd card and game.

Remark.—Such unusual finesse as A practiced (Tricks 1–4) is rarely sound. The temptation to underplay was great. His situation was difficult; if he took the qu d (Trick 1) he had nothing to lead to apparent advantage. But here, as in the vast majority of cases, ordinary play would have resulted in more tricks, and the safest play for A was to win the qu d and lead the qu s. A's persistent holding up was successful only because the opponents permitted it to become so, for D (Trick 4) and C (Trick 5) could have defeated A's game, as pointed out in the notes. C's play of the k s (Trick 10) illustrates that second hand is often directed to the correct play by the previous discards.

Hand VII.

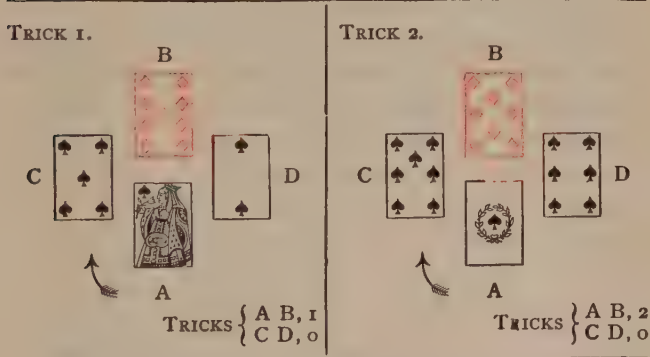
Refusing to Answer the Call.

(Score: A B, 4; C D, 6. 3 c turned. A leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	ace, k, qu, 4, 3	kn, 10, 8, 7, 5		9, 6, 2
h	kn, 6	qu, 7, 4	ace, k, 10, 9, 8	5, 3, 2
c	2	7	ace, k, 10, 5, 4	qu, kn, 9, 8, 6, 3
d	kn, 7, 6, 4, 3	ace, k, qu, 2	10, 9, 8	5

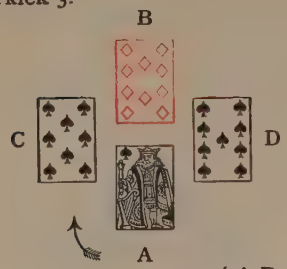
The Play.



Trick 1.—B makes the single discard call.

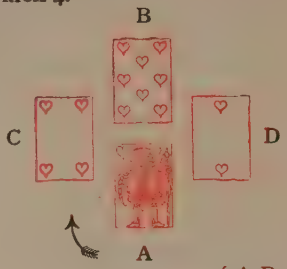
Trick 2.—A very judiciously refuses to answer the call. He can safely go on with s, giving B another discard. A has no re-entry, and he must make the spades now or not at all.

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 3
C D, 0

TRICK 4.

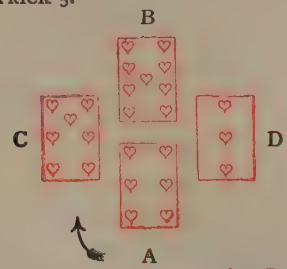


TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 0

Trick 3.—A keeps up the s, he has but one trump, and deems it best to give B another discard. If either C or D is void of s, then one or the other must have held six originally, which A considers is unlikely.

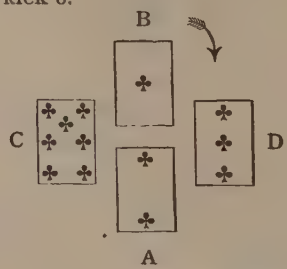
Trick 4.—B's suit must be hearts, and A prefers to lead B the strengthening kn in preference to the trump. Had A answered the call at this point he would have lost two tricks and it would have brought about a very neat ending. (*See* Critical Ending, No. 51.)

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 5
C D, 0

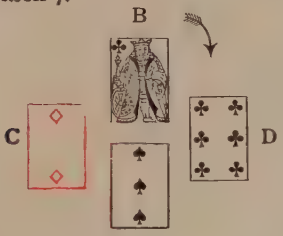
TRICK 6.



TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 0

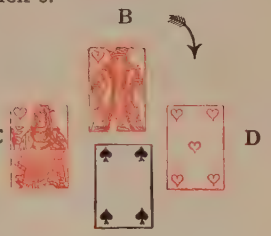
Trick 5.—A, of course, goes on with hearts, giving B the advantage of the finesse against C.

Trick 7.



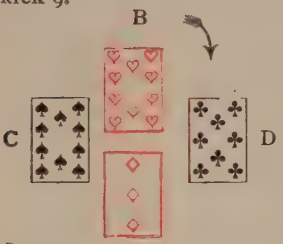
Tricks { A B, 7 / C D, 0

Trick 8.



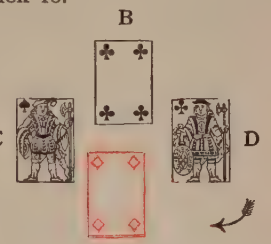
Tricks { A B, 8 / C D, 0

Trick 9.



Tricks { A B, 8 / C D, 1

Trick 10.



Tricks { A B, 8 / C D, 2

Tricks 11–13.—D leads 5 d, and A B score three by cards and game.

Remark.—A played with good judgment. It is, in exceptional cases, better to give partner a strengthening card in his proclaimed suit, than to lead the trump he has asked for, and it is nearly always right to give partner a chance—as A did here—to clear up his hand, before answering his trump request.

Hand VIII.

Fine Play for the Odd Card.

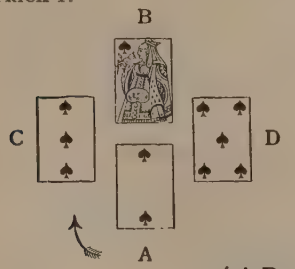
(Score: A B, 6; C D, 6. 2 h turned. A leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	ace, 8, 6, 2	kn, 4, 3	k, qu, 9	10, 7, 5
h	k, 5, 4, 3	ace, qu, 10, 6	8, 7	kn, 9, 2
c	qu, 4	k, kn, 10	8, 7, 6, 2	ace, 9, 5, 3
d	kn, 10, 4	7, 3, 2	ace, k, qu, 9	8, 6, 5

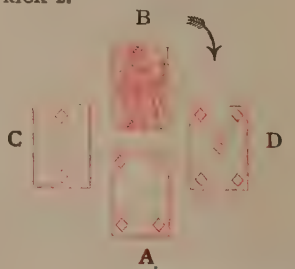
The Play.

Trick 1.



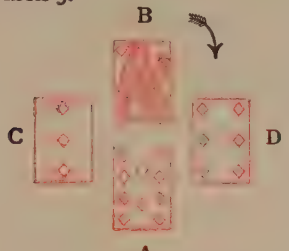
Tricks { A B, 1 / C D, 0

Trick 2.



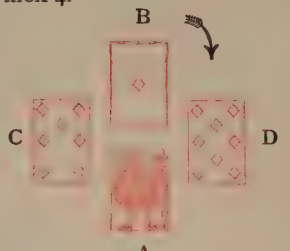
Tricks { A B, 2 / C D, 0

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 3
C D, 0

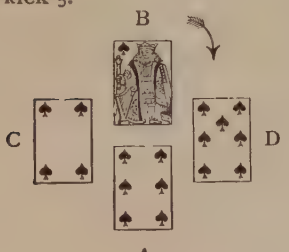
TRICK 4.



TRICKS { A B, 4
C D, 0

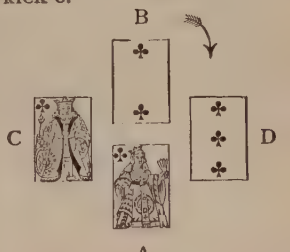
Trick 4.—C reads that B has not strength in trumps; as, with the spades and diamonds well in hand, B would have led trumps, even if only moderately strong in them.

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 5
C D, 0

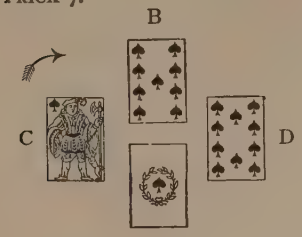
TRICK 6.



TRICKS { A B, 5
C D, 1

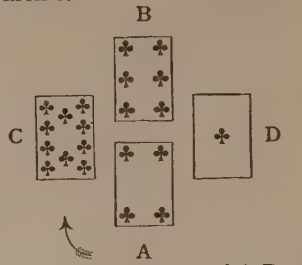
Trick 6.—B is now marked with the 9 d, three small clubs, and at the most three trumps, most likely two trumps and one spade. B has no justification for changing suit and should have gone on with the spade.

TRICK 7.



TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 1

TRICK 8.

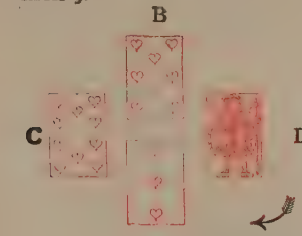


TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 2

Trick 7.—The situation is unique. A B have six tricks home, and A has the k of trumps three times guarded and yet against the best play he cannot make the single trick. C must have trumps come through A, as he (A) has, most likely, four trumps.

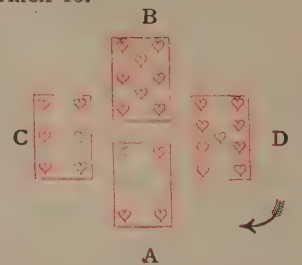
Trick 8.—A leads the clubs which appear to be the best. If A leads the spade, C throws the 10 c, B trumps, D overtrumps with the 9, then leads the kn h and follows with the deuce, C wins with 10 h, and leads the kn c, which D wins and leads a club through A, and A B cannot make the needed trick.

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 3

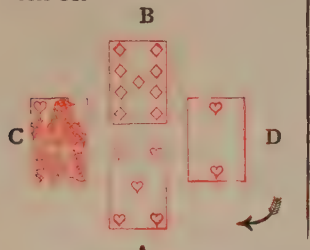
TRICK 10.



TRICKS { A B, 6
C D, 4

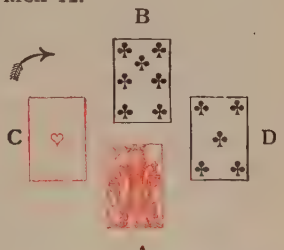
Trick 9.—C's play of the 10 h is a very neat stroke, and is the only play to make the game. C reads that if the k, 9 are with A, or the 9 and one other with B, the game is gone. C does not play the 10 h to echo, but to avoid taking the 9 next led by D, for if D has not the 9 no play will save the game.

TRICK 11.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 5

TRICK 12.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 6

Trick 13.—C makes the kn clubs, and C D score the odd card and game.

Remark.—It not infrequently occurs that a player must play as though he saw the hands, as at double dummy. At trick 8, C and D saw the game was lost unless the trumps lay, just as they did lie, and they played as though they saw A's hand. If these cards were not with A, nothing was lost; if they were there, they took the only way to win. D winning his partner's trick (Trick 8) that he might lead though A, and C's play of the 10 h, that he might avoid taking the lead, were neat coups, and they forced a win when defeat seemed almost inevitable.

Hand IX.

Throwing High Cards.

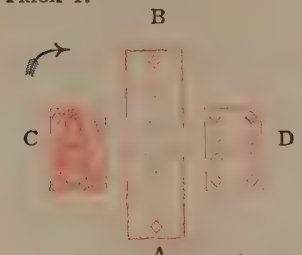
(Score: A B, 3; C D, 4. 8 s turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	qu, 8, 7, 6	10, 2	ace, k, kn	9, 5, 4, 3
h	k, qu, 2	7, 6, 3	kn, 10, 9, 8	ace, 5, 4
c	kn, 10, 6	7, 3, 2	ace, k, qu, 8	9, 5, 4
d	6, 4, 2	ace, k, qu, 8, 7	5, 3	kn, 10, 9

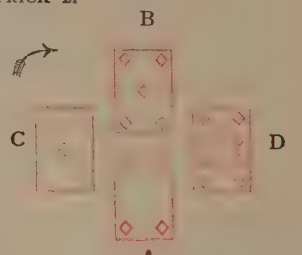
The Play.

Trick 1.



Tricks { A B, 0 / C D, 1

Trick 2.

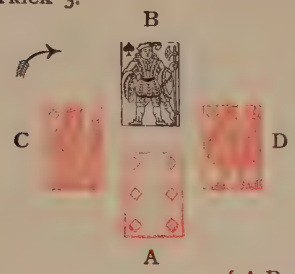


Tricks { A B, 0 / C D, 2

Trick 2.—C is marked with the k and two small d. D has the kn d or void. C notes that D's hand must be weak, as otherwise he would have most likely asked for trumps, for when C opened d with qu, D having the 10,

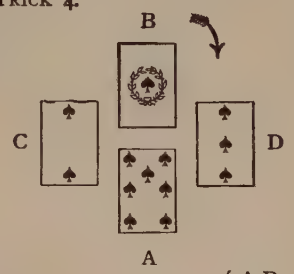
9 could read C with the tierce major, or k, qu and three (or more) small of the suit.

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 2

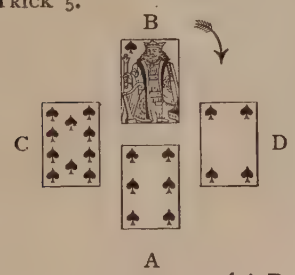
TRICK 4.



TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 2

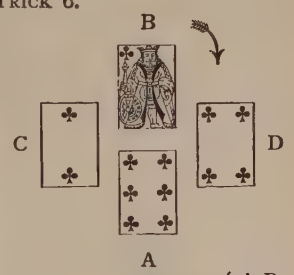
Trick 3 —C has nothing better than to go on with the d. B takes the force, as A must have at least one more d, unless D is unblocking.

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 3 / C D, 2

TRICK 6.

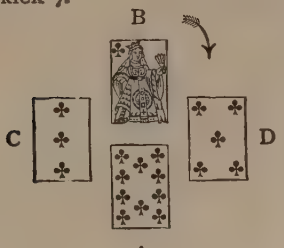


TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 2

Tricks 4–5.—B exacts two rounds of trumps to protect his club suit, besides he is justified in assuming that A

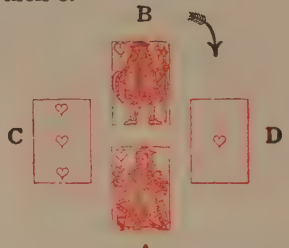
has fair strength in hearts and trumps. A echoes and is marked with the qu, 8 or 9, 8 of trumps.

TRICK 7.



TRICKS { A B, 5 / C D, 2

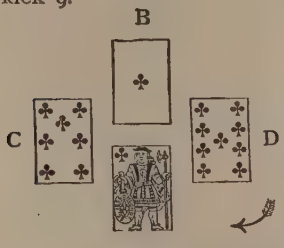
TRICK 8.



TRICKS { A B, 5 / C D, 3

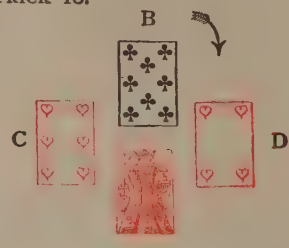
Trick 8.—The play of the qu h by A is a good one. He reads the 9, 5 of trumps with D, and prepares to avoid taking the lead at trick 11. The play of the deuce of h would have lost a trick. B is marked with the ace and a small club. He leads the kn of h from tierce to kn, to force at once the higher cards.

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 6 / C D, 3

TRICK 10.

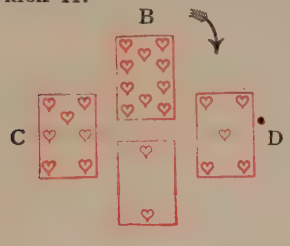


TRICKS { A B, 7 / C D, 3

Trick 9.—B very properly wins the trick as he can read the situation.

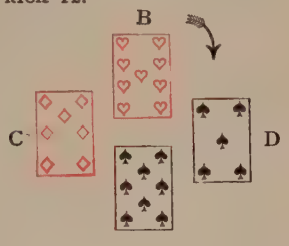
Trick 10.—B leads the thirteenth club, and A's play of the k h is in keeping with his play at trick 8.

TRICK 11.



TRICKS { A B, 8 / C D, 3

TRICK 12.



TRICKS { A B, 9 / C D, 3

Trick 13.—A makes the qu s and A B score four by cards and game.

Remark.—A's play of the qu and king of hearts (Tricks 8 and 10) was very clever, and is the only point in the play. In such situations as this the player should get rid of any high card that will force him into the lead at trick eleven, even if he cannot read his partner with command of the suit, for the play *cannot lose*, and *may gain* a trick.

Hand X.

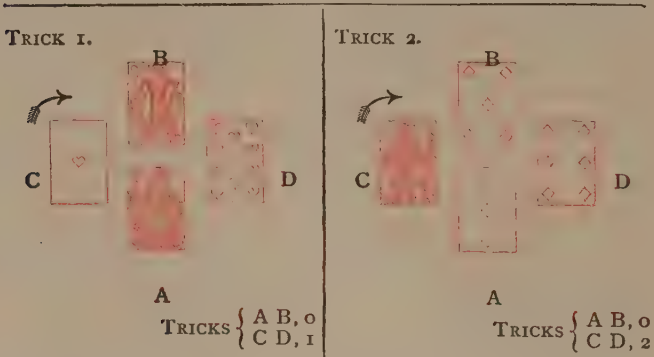
Holding Up and Underplay.

(Score: A B, 5; C D, 6. 3 d turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	ace, k, 4, 2		10, 9, 7, 3	qu, kn, 8, 6, 5
h	qu, kn, 9, 8	ace, 7,6,5,4,3,2	k	10
c	ace	k, qu, kn	10, 9, 8, 7, 5, 4	6, 3, 2
d	ace, 9, 4, 3	k, qu, kn	10, 5	8, 7, 6, 2

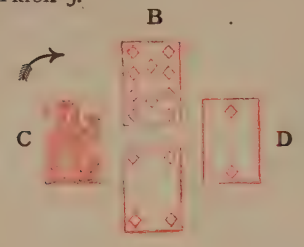
The Play.



Trick 1.—The fall is unusual. C reads that D is calling and unblocking—holding the kn, 10, 9, 8. A's play of the qu deceives C, but the play is not false.

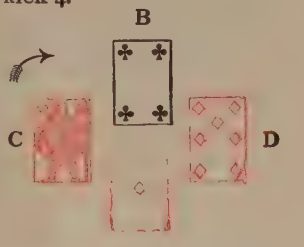
Trick 2.—A does not object to having trumps come out, and refuses to take the k d.

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 0 / C D, 3

TRICK 4.

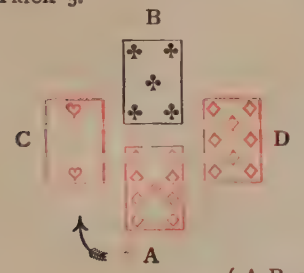


TRIKCS { A B, 1 / C D, 3

Trick 3.—A passes again. Holding ace, 9—the 10 falling from B, A reads that if C goes on with trumps he (A) can draw all the trumps, make his hearts, the ace and king of spades and the ace of c, thus assuring the game. D has shown but four trumps by his echo.

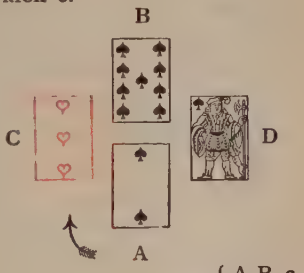
Trick 4.—C goes on with trumps, as he is justified in reading D with the ace and one more, and giving D the remaining hearts, he trusts to make his own long hearts, having re-entry cards in clubs.

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 3

TRICK 6.

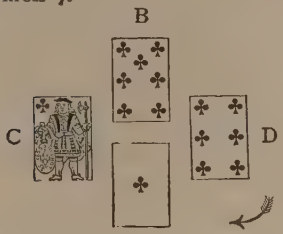


TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 4

Trick 6.—A, having sure re-entry cards, underplays,

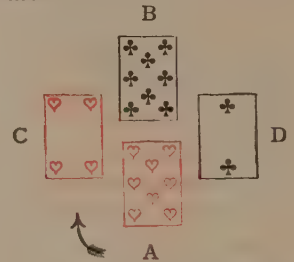
or rather finesses upon the lead. B has not great strength in clubs, as by his discard of 4, then 5, he shows some strength in spades. Had B here great strength in clubs he would have reversed the order of his discards. A would not lead the k of spades in any event, for, if B cannot win the first round for him, A cannot count on more than two tricks in the suit. The ace of c, the two tricks in s, and three h tricks give A the game, but in Long Whist every card is played for the best.

Trick 7.



Tricks { A B, 3 / C D, 4

Trick 8.



Tricks { A B, 4 / C D, 4

Tricks 9–13.—A makes the ace and k of spades and the two tricks in hearts, and A B score two by cards and game.

Remark.—A had a fine hand, and he played it well. It is often good play to refuse to stop the lead of trumps, when you have, as A had here, master cards to protect, that must make, if trumps come out.

C's hand was exceptional, and would have justified exceptional play. Had C opened the fourth-best heart, a play that can be defended, even though the ace is at the head of seven in suit, he would have just saved the game against good play. The student will find material here for analysis, by opening the hand with the 5 h.

Hand XI.

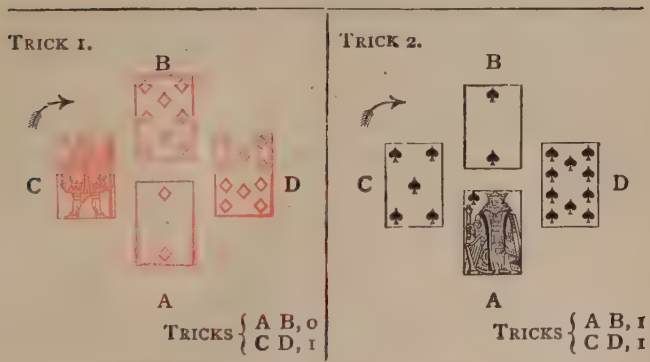
Leading Up to a Double Tenace in Trumps.

(Score: A B, 6; C D, 0. 4 s turned. C leader.)

THE HANDS.

	A'S HAND.	C'S HAND.	B'S HAND.	D'S HAND.
s	ace, k, 9, 7, 4	5, 3	2	qu, kn, 10, 8, 6
h		6	a, k, q, 7, 5, 4, 3, 2	kn, 10, 9, 8
c	ace, k, 6, 3	9, 8, 7, 5, 4	10, 2	qu, kn
d	7, 5, 4, 2	ace, k, qu, kn, 6	9, 8	10, 3

The Play.

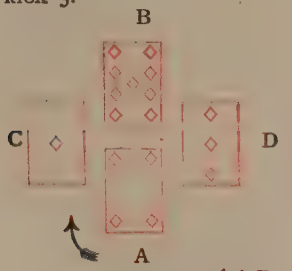


Trick 1.—C notes that unless A has five diamonds, B or D is calling.

Trick 2.—The propriety of C's trump lead may be

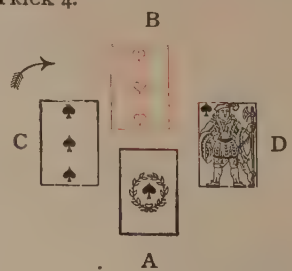
questioned. The conservative player might lead the 5 of clubs, and defend the play upon the ground that D must have high cards in this suit, as C has five clubs, none higher than the 9, and that in the event of the trick going to the opponents, they must, in all probability, open the heart suit, which C can trump, and then, if the fall warrants, lead trumps. The fall of the cards to trick 1, in conjunction with C's hand, render the position susceptible of interesting and instructive analysis. C was justified in assuming that either B or D was calling. If B was calling the game was gone, in all probability. C argued that if D was not calling, he must have numerical strength, at least in hearts and trumps. If it was B who was calling, a trump led through might be of avail. To continue the diamonds would be injudicious for in the event of D calling, he can have but *one* d, and as he (C) has no re-entry card, he will not make his suit, unless after trumps are exhausted, D can lead a diamond. The score favored the forward game, and only the ultra conservative player would have done other than C, in his situation.

TRICK 3.



TRICKS { A B, 1 / C D, 2

TRICK 4.

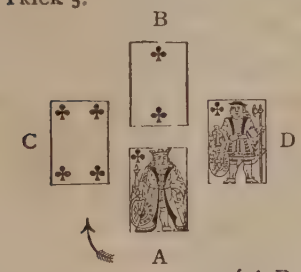


TRICKS { A B, 2 / C D, 2

Trick 3.—A's lead of the d seems the very best; A reads that D is probably calling, and that C has led trumps upon this assumption; if so, A, holding five trumps, offers B the chance of making a small trump if void of the suit, which is most likely, having played the 8. Besides, if D is calling, he has but *one* more d, and A wishes to force its play that D may have no d to give C later on. A knows that the d must lose (if B cannot trump it) in any event, and by its immediate play he makes it lose somewhat to his advantage. D completes the call. C shows k, qu and one small d remaining.

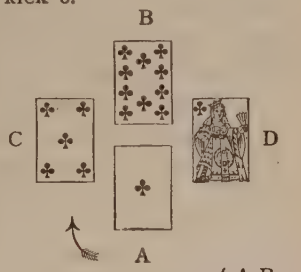
Trick 4.—B shows h as his suit. A has not a h, and it is now his business to play, if possible, to force the opponents to eventually lead this suit. A can read D with the double tenace over him in trumps.

TRICK 5.



TRICKS { A B, 3 / C D, 2

TRICK 6.

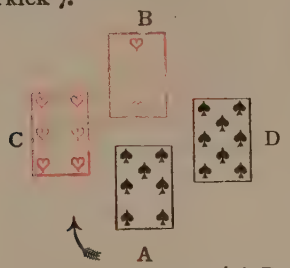


TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 2

Trick 6.—The fall enables A to read the hands with unusual accuracy; B is all hearts; D must have the qu,

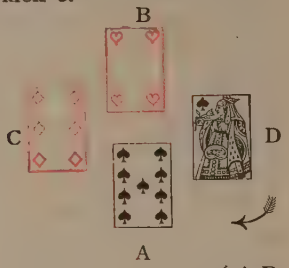
8, 6 of s and four hearts; C the 9, 8, 7 c; k, qu, 6 d, and one heart.

Trick 7.



Tricks { A B, 4 / C D, 3

Trick 8.

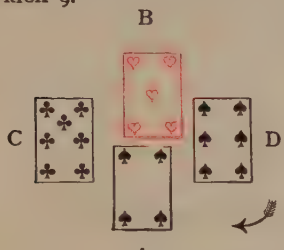


Tricks { A B, 4 / C D, 4

Trick 7.—A plays his hand with consummate skill. Throwing the lead at the proper moment is always a neat point, and here it is particularly effective. A must throw the lead with D, and keep it there, even though he must lose three tricks in trumps to do it. Mark how accurately A has managed his hand. Note that the lead of the 4 s (Trick 7) would cost A *three tricks*, for if A had led the 4 s, D would have taken with the 8 s, then led the qu s, and then put A into the lead with the 6 s, and A could not take another trick. A has been exact to the very pip. Even the 7 was led in preference to the 9, as it offered D the triple opportunity to blunder, which the 9 does not, for if D should take with the qu, and then lead the 8 or 6, or if with the 8, and then lead the 6, in each case he would lose a trick.

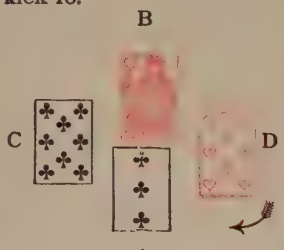
Trick 8.—D must lead the qu s or lose a trick. A would have lost two tricks had he played the 4 s here.

TRICK 9.



TRICKS { A B, 4 / C D, 5

TRICK 10.



TRICKS { A B, 5 / C D, 5

Trick 9.—D is helpless; he must draw the trump or lose a trick.

Tricks 11–13.—B makes the ace, k of hearts, and D the kn h, and A B score the odd card and game.

Remark.—C, by continuing the d, or opening the club suit (Trick 2), might have done better, but his play would have succeeded except for A's fine play, and the very unusual distribution of the cards.

CHAPTER XXIX.

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF WHIST LAWS.

THE laws governing the play of American Whist are based upon the following postulations:—

1. The conduct of the American game should be governed by a code based on Whist for Whist, apart from stakes.

2. Infractions of whist laws and rules of table etiquette are unintentional.

3. No player takes advantage of information afforded by breaches of the law.

4. The innocent cannot suffer loss, nor the offender gain advantage, from any misdemeanor—except in the case of the revoke.

5. Whist laws should be framed with these objects in view, viz.: To define the general order of play, to promote closer attention, and to maintain decorum.

6. The penalty for the infraction of a law is not for the purpose of restitution for damages (except in the case of the revoke), but solely to stimulate precaution, and repress improprieties of play.

7. All breaches of the law (except in the case of the revoke) are equally grave, and demand in equity a uniform and fixed penalty.

8. It is impossible to determine the effect of the enforced play of a card, or a suit as a penalty.

9. Such penalties as the calling of cards and suits, the demand of the highest or lowest of a suit, or to trump or not to trump a trick, not only rob the score of its integrity as a test of skill, but they are incompatible with good whist, and render a code infeasible and unadapted to general application.

NOTE.—The Laws of Whist, as revised and adopted at the Third American Whist Congress—*see* Chapter XXXI, Page 574, *et seq.*—govern the play of all American Whist League Clubs, as well as all match and tournament games played by League Clubs.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE LAWS OF AMERICAN WHIST.

The Game.

1. A game consists of seven points, or as many more as may be made by the hand in which seven is reached. Each trick above six counts one point. Each hand must be played out, and every trick taken must be scored.

Forming the Table.

2. Four persons out of any number, by agreement, or by cutting or drawing lower cards than the rest, form a table. These four may cut or draw for, or agree upon, partners.

Cutting.

3. In cutting, the ace is the lowest card. All must cut from the same pack. If a player exposes more than one card, he must cut again. Drawing cards from the outspread pack may be resorted to in place of cutting.

Shuffling.

4. Before every deal, the cards must be shuffled. When two packs are used, the dealer's partner must collect and shuffle the cards for the ensuing deal and place

them at his right hand. A pack must not be shuffled during the play of a hand, nor so as to expose the face of any card. In all cases the dealer may shuffle last.

Cutting to the Dealer.

5. The dealer must present the pack to his right hand adversary to be cut; the adversary must take a portion from the top of the pack and place it towards the dealer; at least four cards must be left in each packet; the dealer must reunite the packets by placing the one not removed in cutting upon the other.

6. If, in cutting or reuniting the separate packets, a card is exposed, the pack must be reshuffled by the dealer and cut again; if there is any confusion of the cards or doubt as to the place where the pack was separated, there must be a new cut.

7. If the dealer reshuffles the pack after it has been properly cut, he loses his deal.

Dealing.

8. When the pack has been properly cut and reunited, the dealer must distribute the cards, one at a time, to each player in regular rotation, beginning at his left. The last, which is the trump card, must be turned up at the right hand of the dealer. At the end of the hand, or when the deal is lost, the deal passes to the left.

9. Any one dealing out of turn, or with his adversaries' pack, may be stopped before the trump card is turned, after which, the deal is valid and the packs, if changed, so remain.

10. There must be a new deal by the same dealer:—

I. If any card except the last is faced in the pack.

II. If, during the deal or before all have played to the first trick, the pack is proved to consist of more or less than fifty-two cards, or if at any time during the play of the hand the pack is proved imperfect in the rank of the cards; but any prior score made with that pack shall stand.

Misdealing.

11. It is a misdeal:—

I. If the dealer omits to have the pack cut and his adversaries discover the error before the trump card is turned and before looking at any of their cards.

II. If he deals a card incorrectly.

III. If he exposes a card.

IV. If he counts the cards on the table or in the remainder of the pack.

V. If he looks at the face of any card before the deal is completed.

VI. If he places the trump card face downwards upon his own or any other player's cards.

VII. If, having a pack of exactly fifty-two cards, he does not deal to each player the proper number of cards and the error is discovered before all have played to the first trick.

A misdeal loses the deal, unless, during the deal, either of the adversaries touches a card or in any other manner interrupts the dealer.

Irregularities in the Hands.

12. If, at any time after all have played to the first trick, a player is found to have either more or less than his correct number of cards, his side cannot score in that hand. If his adversaries have their right number, they may score, if by tricks entitled to do so; in which case the surplus or missing card or cards are not taken into account.

The Trump Card.

13. The trump card must remain face upwards on the table at the right hand of the dealer until it is his turn to play to the first trick, and must be taken into his hand before the second trick has been turned and quitted.

Exposed Cards.

14. The following are exposed cards:—

I. Every card led or played out of turn.

II. Every card thrown with the one led or played to the current trick.

III. A renounce in error corrected in time to save a revoke.

IV. Every card faced upon the table otherwise than in the regular course of play.

All exposed cards must be taken into the hand again.

Miscellaneous.

15. Each trick must be turned and quitted before the first card to the next trick is led.

16. When a trick has been turned and quitted, it must not again be seen until after the hand has been played.

17. If any player gathers a trick that does not belong to his side, the opposing side may inform him of his error, and the offender is amenable to law 21.

18. Any player during the play, may ask what the trump suit is, and suffer the penalty of law 21, and the question must be answered by simply naming the trump suit.

19. Any one, during the play of a trick and before the cards have been touched for the purpose of gathering them together, may demand that the players draw their cards, and the side making the demand must suffer the penalty of law 21.

20. All conversation must cease when the first card is thrown, and silence must continue until the last card of the hand is played.

21. The penalty for the infringement of laws 13 to 20 inclusive, is the addition of one point, for each offense, to the score of the claimants.

Revoking.

22. A revoke is a renounce in error not corrected in time. A player renounces in error, when, holding one or more cards of the suit led, he plays a card of a different suit.

A renounce in error may be corrected by the player making it, before the trick in which it occurs has been turned and quitted, unless either he or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, has led or played to the following trick.

If a player corrects his mistake in time to save a revoke, any player or players who have played after him may withdraw their cards and substitute others; the cards so withdrawn are not subject to any penalty.

23. The penalty for revoking is the transfer of two tricks from the revoking side to their adversaries; it can be enforced for as many revokes as occur during the hand. No score that wins the game can be made by the revoking side; they can, nevertheless, score all points made by them up to the score of six.

24. At the end of a hand, the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks. If the cards have been mixed, the claim may be urged and proved, if possible; but no proof is necessary and the revoke is established, if, after it has been claimed, the accused player or his partner mixes the cards before they have been examined to the satisfaction of the adversaries.

Penalties.

25. A penalty must not be claimed during the play of a hand, but must be claimed before the cards have been presented and cut for the following deal.

Scoring.

26. The score for each hand must be announced before the cards have been presented and cut for the next deal, but not thereafter. A score by cards takes precedence of a score by penalty.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE LAWS OF WHIST,

AS REVISED AND ADOPTED AT THE

THIRD AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS.

Chicago, June 20–24, 1893.

THE GAME.

1. A game consists of seven points, each trick above six counting one. The value of the game is determined by deducting the losers' score from seven.

FORMING THE TABLE.

2. Those first in the room have the preference. If, by reason of two or more arriving at the same time, more than four assemble, the preference among the last comers is determined by cutting, a lower cut giving the preference over all cutting higher. A complete table consists of six; the four having the preference play. Partners are determined by cutting; the highest two play against the lowest two; the lowest deals and has the choice of seats and cards.

3. If two players cut intermediate cards of equal value, they cut again; the lower of the new cut plays with the original lowest.

4. If three players cut cards of equal value, they cut again. If the fourth has cut the highest card, the lowest two of the new cut are partners and the lowest deals. If the fourth has cut the lowest card, he deals and the highest two of the new cut are partners.

5. At the end of a game, if there are more than four belonging to the table, a sufficient number of the players retire to admit those awaiting their turn to play. In determining which players remain in, those who have played a less number of consecutive games have the preference over all who have

played a greater number; between two or more who have played an equal number, the preference is determined by cutting, a lower cut giving the preference over all cutting higher.

6. To entitle one to enter a table, he must declare his intention to do so before any one of the players has cut for the purpose of commencing a new game or of cutting out.

CUTTING.

7. In cutting, the ace is the lowest card. All must cut from the same pack. If a player exposes more than one card, he must cut again. Drawing cards from the outspread pack may be resorted to in place of cutting.

SHUFFLING.

8. Before every deal, the cards must be shuffled. When two packs are used, the dealer's partner must collect and shuffle the cards for the ensuing deal and place them at his right hand. In all cases the dealer may shuffle last.

9. A pack must not be shuffled during the play of a hand, nor so as to expose the face of any card.

CUTTING TO THE DEALER.

10. The dealer must present the pack to his right hand adversary to be cut; the adversary must take a portion from the top of the pack and place it towards the dealer; at least four cards must be left in each packet; the dealer must reunite the packets by placing the one not removed in cutting upon the other.

11. If, in cutting or in reuniting the separate packets, a card is exposed, the pack must be reshuffled by the dealer and cut again; if there is any confusion of the cards or doubt as to the place where the pack was separated, there must be a new cut.

12. If the dealer reshuffles the pack after it has been properly cut, he loses his deal.

DEALING.

13. When the pack has been properly cut and reunited, the dealer must distribute the cards, one at a time, to each player in regular rotation, beginning at his left. The last, which is the trump card, must be turned up before the dealer. At the

end of the hand or when the deal is lost, the deal passes to the player next to the dealer on his left, and so on to each in turn.

14. There must be a new deal by the same dealer:—

I. If any card except the last is faced in the pack.

II. If, during the deal or during the play of the hand, the pack is proved incorrect or imperfect; but any prior score made with that pack shall stand.

15. If, during the deal, a card is exposed, the side not in fault may demand a new deal, provided neither of that side has touched a card. If a new deal does not take place, the exposed card is not liable to be called.

16. Any one dealing out of turn or with his adversaries' pack may be stopped before the trump card is turned, after which, the deal is valid and the packs, if changed, so remain.

MISDEALING.

17. It is a misdeal:—

I. If the dealer omits to have the pack cut and his adversaries discover the error before the trump card is turned and before looking at any of their cards.

II. If he deals a card incorrectly and fails to correct the error before dealing another.

III. If he counts the cards on the table or in the remainder of the pack.

IV. If, having a perfect pack, he does not deal to each player the proper number of cards, and the error is discovered before all have played to the first trick.

V. If he looks at the trump card before the deal is completed.

VI. If he places the trump card face downwards upon his own or any other player's cards.

A misdeal loses the deal, unless, during the deal, either of the adversaries touches a card or in any other manner interrupts the dealer.

THE TRUMP CARD.

18. The dealer must leave the trump card face upwards on the table until it is his turn to play to the first trick; if it is left on the table until after the second trick has been turned and quitted, it is liable to be called. After it has been lawfully

taken up, it must not be named, and any player naming it is liable to have his highest or his lowest trump called by either adversary. A player may, however, ask what the trump suit is.

IRREGULARITIES IN THE HANDS.

19. If, at any time after all have played to the first trick, the pack being perfect, a player is found to have either more or less than his correct number of cards, and his adversaries have their right number, the latter, upon the discovery of such surplus or deficiency, may consult and shall have the choice:—

I. To have a new deal; or

II. To have the hand played out, in which case the surplus or missing card or cards are not taken into account.

If either of the adversaries also has more or less than his correct number, there must be a new deal.

If any player has a surplus card by reason of an omission to play to a trick, his adversaries can exercise the foregoing privilege only after he has played to the trick following the one in which such omission occurred.

CARDS LIABLE TO BE CALLED.

20. The following cards are liable to be called by either adversary:—

I. Every card faced upon the table otherwise than in the regular course of play, but not including a card led out of turn.

II. Every card thrown with the one led or played to the current trick. The player must indicate the one led or played.

III. Every card so held by a player that his partner sees any portion of its face.

IV. All the cards in a hand lowered or shown by a player so that his partner sees more than one card of it.

V. Every card named by the player holding it.

21. All cards liable to be called must be placed and left face upward on the table. A player must lead or play them when they are called, provided he can do so without revoking. The call may be repeated at each trick until the card is played. A player cannot be prevented from leading or playing a card liable to be called; if he can get rid of it in the course of play, no penalty remains.

22. If a player leads a card better than any his adversaries hold of the suit, and then leads one or more other cards without waiting for his partner to play, the latter may be called upon by either adversary to take the first trick, and the other cards thus improperly played are liable to be called; it makes no difference whether he plays them one after the other, or throws them all on the table together, after the first card is played, the others are liable to be called.

23. A player having a card liable to be called must not play another until the adversaries have stated whether or not they wish to call the card liable to the penalty. If he plays another card without awaiting the decision of the adversaries, such other card also is liable to be called.

LEADING OUT OF TURN.

24. If any player leads out of turn, a suit may be called from him or his partner, the first time it is the turn of either of them to lead. The penalty can be enforced only by the adversary on the right of the player from whom a suit can lawfully be called.

If a player, so called on to lead a suit, has none of it, or if all have played to the false lead, no penalty can be enforced. If all have not played to the trick, the cards erroneously played to such false lead are not liable to be called and must be taken back.

PLAYING OUT OF TURN.

25. If the third hand plays before the second, the fourth hand also may play before the second.

26. If the third hand has not played, and the fourth hand plays before the second, the latter may be called upon by the third hand to play his highest or lowest card of the suit led or, if he has none, to trump or not to trump the trick.

ABANDONED HANDS.

27. If all four players throw their cards on the table, face upwards, no further play of that hand is permitted. The result of the hand, as then claimed or admitted, is established.

provided that, if a revoke is discovered, the revoke penalty attaches.

REVOKING.

28. A revoke is a renounce in error not corrected in time. A player renounces in error, when, holding one or more cards of the suit led, he plays a card of a different suit.

A renounce in error may be corrected by the player making it, before the trick in which it occurs has been turned and quitted, unless either he or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, has led or played to the following trick, or unless his partner has asked whether or not he has any of the suit renounced.

29. If a player corrects his mistake in time to save a revoke, the card improperly played by him is liable to be called; any player or players, who have played after him, may withdraw their cards and substitute others; the cards so withdrawn are not liable to be called.

30. The penalty for revoking is the transfer of two tricks from the revoking side to their adversaries; it can be enforced for as many revokes as occur during the hand. The revoking side cannot win the game in that hand; if both sides revoke, neither can win the game in that hand.

31. The revoking player and his partner may require the hand, in which the revoke has been made, to be played out, and score all points made by them up to the score of six.

32. At the end of a hand, the claimants of a revoke may search all the tricks. If the cards have been mixed, the claim may be urged and proved, if possible; but no proof is necessary and the revoke is established, if, after it has been claimed, the accused player or his partner mixes the cards before they have been examined to the satisfaction of the adversaries.

33. The revoke can be claimed at any time before the cards have been presented and cut for the following deal, but not the

MISCELLANEOUS.

34 . during the play of a trick and before the cards

have been touched for the purpose of gathering them together, may demand that the players draw their cards.

35. If any one, prior to his partner playing, calls attention in any manner to the trick or to the score, the adversary last to play to the trick may require the offender's partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit led or, if he has none, to trump or not to trump the trick.

36. If any player says "I can win the rest," "The rest are ours," "We have the game," or words to that effect, his partner's cards must be laid upon the table and are liable to be called.

37. When a trick has been turned and quitted, it must not again be seen until after the hand has been played. A violation of this law subjects the offender's side to the same penalty as in case of a lead out of turn.

38. If a player is lawfully called upon to play the highest or lowest of a suit, or to trump or not to trump a trick, or to lead a suit, and unnecessarily fails to comply, he is liable to the same penalty as if he had revoked.

39. In all cases where a penalty has been incurred, the offender must await the decision of the adversaries. If either of them, with or without his partner's consent, demands a penalty, to which they are entitled, such decision is final. If the wrong adversary demands a penalty or a wrong penalty is demanded, none can be enforced.

CHAPTER XXXII.

LAWS OF DUPLICATE WHIST,

AS ADOPTED BY THE

AMERICAN WHIST LEAGUE,

AT THE

EIGHTH ANNUAL CONGRESS,

held in Boston, Mass., July 11–16, 1898.

LAW 1.—DEFINITIONS.

Section 1. The words and phrases used in these laws shall be construed in accordance with the following definitions, unless such construction is inconsistent with the context:

(A) The thirteen cards received by any one player are termed a "hand."

(B) The four hands into which a pack is distributed for play are termed a "deal"; the same term is also used to designate the act of distributing the cards to the players.

(C) A "tray" is a device for retaining the hands of a deal and indicating the order of playing them.

(D) The player who is entitled to the trump card is termed the "dealer," whether the cards have or have not been dealt by him.

(E) The first play of a deal is termed "the original play"; the second or any subsequent play of such deal, the "overplay."

(F) "Duplicate Whist" is that form of the game of whist in which each deal is played once only by each player, but in which each is so overplayed as to bring the play of teams, pairs or individuals into comparison.

(G) A player "renounces" when he does not follow suit to the card led; he "renounces in error" when, although holding one or more cards of the suit led, he plays a card of a different suit; if such renounce in error is not lawfully corrected, it constitutes a "revoke."

(H) A trick is "turned and quitted" when all four players have turned and quitted their respective cards.

LAW 2.—FORMATION OF TEAMS AND ARRANGEMENT OF PLAYERS.

Sec. 1. The contesting teams must each consist of the same number of players. They may be formed and seated at tables as determined by agreement, lot or otherwise, and the positions of the players at the table shall be designated as "North," "East," "South," and "West."

LAW 3.—SHUFFLING.

Sec. 1. Before the cards are dealt they must be shuffled in the presence of an adversary or the umpire. Each player has the right to shuffle them once before each deal, each new deal, and each new cut. In all cases the dealer may shuffle last.

Sec. 2. The pack must not be so shuffled as to expose the face of any card, and if a card is so exposed each of the players has the right to re-shuffle the pack.

LAW 4.—CUTTING FOR THE TRUMP.

Sec. 1. The dealer must present the cards to his right hand adversary to be cut; such adversary must take from the top of the pack at least four cards and place them towards the dealer, leaving at least four cards in the remaining packet; the dealer must reunite the packets by placing the one not removed in cutting upon the other. If, in cutting, or reuniting the separate packets, a card is exposed, the pack must be re-shuffled and cut again; if there is any confusion of the cards or doubt as to the place where the pack was separated, there must be a new cut.

LAW 5.—DEALING.

Sec. 1. When the pack has been properly cut and reunited, the cards must be dealt, one at a time, face down, from the top of the pack, the first to the player at the left of the dealer, and each successive card to the player at the left of the one to whom the last preceding card has been dealt. The last, which is the trump card, must be turned and placed face up on the tray, or, if no tray is used, then at the right of the dealer.

Sec. 2. There must be a new deal:—

(A) If any card except the last is faced or exposed in any way in dealing.

(B) If the pack is proved incorrect or imperfect.

(C) If either more or less than thirteen cards are dealt to any player.

(D) If the dealer's hand does not contain the trump card.

Sec. 3. There must be a new deal at the request of either player, provided such request is made by him before he has examined his cards:—

(A) If the cards are dealt by any person other than the dealer.

(B) If the pack has not been properly cut.

(C) If a card is dealt incorrectly, and the error is not corrected before another card is dealt.

(D) If the trump card is placed face down upon another card.

LAW 6.—THE TRUMP CARD.

Sec. 1. The trump card and the number of the deal must be recorded before the play begins, on a slip provided for that purpose, and must not be elsewhere recorded. Such slip must be shown to an adversary, then turned face down and placed in the tray, if one is used.

Sec. 2. The dealer must leave the trump card face up until the first trick is turned and quitted, unless it is played to such trick. He must take the trump card into his hand and turn down the trump slip before the second trick is turned and quitted.

Sec. 3. When a deal is taken up for overplay, the dealer must show the trump slip to an adversary, and thereafter treat the trump slip and trump card as in the case of an original deal. (See Law 6, Sec. 1.)

Sec. 4. After the trump card has been lawfully taken into the hand, and the trump slip turned face down, the trump card must not be named nor the trump slip examined during the play of the deal; a player may, however, ask what the trump suit is.

Sec. 5. If a player unlawfully looks at the trump slip, his highest or lowest trump may be called; if a player unlawfully names the trump card, his partner's highest or lowest trump may be called.

Sec. 6. These penalties can be inflicted by either adversary at any time during the play of the deal in which they are incurred before the player from whom the call can be made has played to the current trick; the call may be repeated at each or any trick until the card is played, but can not be changed.

Sec. 7. When a deal has been played, the cards of the respective players, including the trump card, must be placed in the tray face down, and the trump slip placed face up on top of the dealer's cards.

Sec. 8. If, on the overplay of a deal, a trump card is turned other than the one recorded on the trump slip, and such error is discovered and corrected before the play of the deal is commenced, the card turned in error is liable to be called.

Sec. 9. If such error is not corrected until after the overplay has begun, and more than two tables are engaged in play, the offender and his partner shall be given the lowest score made with their hands on that deal at any table; if less than three tables are engaged, the offender's adversaries may consult, and shall have the option either to score the deal as a tie, or to have the pack re-dealt, and such new deal played and overplayed.

Sec. 10. Should a player, after the cards are dealt, record on the trump slip a different trump from the one turned in dealing, and the error be discovered at the next table, there must be a new deal; if the deal has been played at one or more tables with the wrong trump, the recorded trump must be taken as correct, and the pair of the player making the error be given the lowest score for that deal. If, however, less than three tables are in play, there must be a new deal.

LAW 7.—IRREGULARITIES IN THE HANDS.

Sec 1. In case a player on the overplay is found to have either more or less than his correct number of cards, if less than three tables are engaged, there must be a new deal; but if more than two tables are in play, the hands must be rectified and then passed to the next table. The table at which the error was discovered must not overplay the deal, but shall take the average score.

Sec. 2. If, after the first trick has been turned and quitted, a player is found to have less than his correct number of cards, and the missing card or cards are found in the tray, such player and his partner shall be given the lowest score on that deal.

LAW 8.—PLAYING, TURNING, AND QUITTING THE CARDS.

Sec. 1. Each player, when it is his turn to play, must place his card face up before him, and towards the centre of the table, and allow it to remain upon the table in this position until all have played to the trick, when he must turn it over and place it face down, and nearer to himself, placing each successive card, as he turns it, so that it overlaps the last card played by him and with the ends toward the winners of the trick. After he has played his card, and also after he has turned it, he must quit it by removing his hand.

Sec. 2. The cards must be left in the order in which they were played and quitted, until the scores for the deal are recorded.

Sec. 3. During the play of a deal a player must not pick up or turn another player's cards.

Sec. 4. Before a trick is turned and quitted, any player may require any of the other players to show the face of the card played to that trick.

Sec. 5. If a player names a card of a trick which has been turned and quitted, or turns or raises any such card so that any such portion of its face can be seen by himself or any other player, he is liable to the same penalty as if he had led out of turn.

LAW 9.—CARDS LIABLE TO BE CALLED.

Sec. 1. The following cards are liable to be called:

(A) Every card so placed upon the table as to expose any of the printing on its face, except such cards as these laws specifically provide shall not be so liable.

(B) Every card so held by a player that his partner sees any of the printing on its face.

(C) Every card (except the trump card) named by the player holding it.

(D) The trump card, if it is not taken into the dealer's hand, and the trump slip turned face down before the second trick is turned and quitted.

Sec. 2. If a player says, "I can win the rest," "The rest are ours," "It makes no difference how you play," or words to that effect, his partner's cards must be laid face up on the table, and are liable to be called.

Sec. 3. All cards liable to be called must be placed and left until played face up on the table. A player must lead or play them when lawfully called, provided he can do so without revoking; the call may be repeated at each or any trick until the card is played. A player can not, however, be prevented from leading or playing a card liable to be called; if he can get rid of it in the course of play, no penalty remains.

Sec. 4. The holder of a card liable to be called can be required to play it only by the adversary on his right. If such

adversary plays without calling it, the holder may play to that trick as he pleases; if it is the holder's turn to lead, the card must be called before the preceding trick has been turned and quitted, or before the holder has led a different card, otherwise, he may lead as he pleases.

LAW 10.—LEADING OUT OF TURN.

Sec. 1. If a player leads out of turn, and the error is discovered before all have played to such lead, a suit may be called from him or from his partner, as the case may be, the first time thereafter it is the right of either of them to lead; but the card led out of turn is not liable to be called, and must be taken into the hand. The penalty can be enforced only by the adversary on the right of the one from whom a lead can lawfully be called. If all have played to the false lead, the right to the penalty is lost; if one or more, but not all, have played to the trick, the cards played to such false lead must be taken back and are not liable to be called.

Sec. 2. If a player leads when it is the turn of an adversary to lead, the right to call a suit is lost, unless the player having the right to inflict the penalty announces the suit he desires led before the first trick thereafter won by the offender or his partner is turned and quitted.

Sec. 3. If a player leads when it is his partner's turn, the proper leader must not lead until a suit has been lawfully called or the right to inflict the penalty has been waived or forfeited by his adversaries. If any one leads while liable to this penalty, the card so led is liable to be called; but if either adversary plays to such lead, the right to call a suit is lost.

Sec. 4. If a player, when called on to lead a suit, has none of it, the penalty is paid and he may lead as he pleases.

LAW 11.—PLAYING OUT OF TURN.

Sec. 1. If the third hand plays before the second, the fourth hand also may play before the second.

Sec. 2. If the third hand has not played, and the fourth

hand plays before the second, the latter may be called upon by the third hand to play his highest or lowest card of the suit lead, or, if he has none of it, to trump or not to trump the trick; the penalty can not be inflicted after the third hand has played to the trick. If the player liable to this penalty plays before it has been inflicted, waived or lost, the card so played is liable to be called.

LAW 12.—THE REVOKE.

Sec. 1. A renounce in error may be corrected by the player making it, except in the following cases in which a revoke is established and the penalty therefore incurred:

(A) When the trick in which it occurs has been turned and quitted.

(B) When the renouncing player or his partner, whether in his right turn or otherwise, has led or played to the following trick.

(C) When the partner of the renouncing player has called attention to the renounce.

Sec. 2. At any time before a trick is turned and quitted, a player may ask an adversary if he has any of a suit to which such adversary has renounced in that trick, and can require the error to be corrected in case such adversary is found to have any of such suit.

Sec. 3. If a player who has renounced in error lawfully corrects his mistake, the card improperly played by him is liable to be called; any player who has played after him may withdraw his card and substitute another; a card so withdrawn is not liable to be called.

Sec. 4. The penalty for a revoke is the transfer of two tricks from the revoking side to their adversaries; it can be enforced for as many revokes as occur during the play of that deal, but is limited to the number of tricks won by the offending side; no pair, however, can score more than thirteen on the play of any one deal. The revoking player and his partner can

not score more than the average on the deal in which the revoke occurs.

Sec. 5. A revoke may be claimed at any time before the last trick of the deal in which it occurs has been turned and quitted and the score recorded, but not thereafter.

Sec. 6. At the end of the play of a deal, the claimants of a revoke can examine all the cards; if either hand has been shuffled, the claim may be urged and proved if possible; but no proof is necessary and the revoke is established, if, after it has been claimed, the accused player or his partner disturbs the order of the cards before they have been examined to the satisfaction of the adversaries.

LAW 13.—MISCELLANEOUS.

Sec. 1. If any one calls attention in any manner to the trick, before his partner has played thereto, the adversary last to play to the trick may require the offender's partner to play his highest or lowest of the suit led, or, if he has none of that suit, to trump or not to trump the trick.

Sec. 2. A player has the right to remind his partner that it is his privilege to enforce a penalty, and also to inform him of the penalty he can enforce.

Sec. 3. A player has the right to prevent his partner from committing any irregularity, except revoking.

Sec. 4. If either of the adversaries, whether with or without his partner's consent, demands or waives a penalty to which they are entitled, such decision is final; if the wrong adversary demands a penalty, or a wrong penalty is demanded none can be enforced.

Sec. 5. If a player is lawfully called upon to play the highest or the lowest of a suit, to trump or not to trump a trick, to lead a suit, or to win a trick, and unnecessarily fails to comply, he is liable to the same penalty as if he had revoked.

Sec. 6. If any one leads or plays a card, and then, before his partner has played to the trick, leads one or more other

cards, or plays two or more cards together, all of which are better than any his adversaries hold of the suit, his partner may be called upon by either adversary to win the first or any subsequent trick to which any of said cards are played, and the remaining cards so played are liable to be called.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE ETIQUETTE OF WHIST,

AS ADOPTED BY THE

THIRD AMERICAN WHIST CONGRESS,

Chicago, June 20–24, 1893.

The following rules belong to the established code of whist etiquette. They are formulated with a view to discourage and repress certain improprieties of conduct, therein pointed out, which are not reached by the laws. The courtesy which marks the intercourse of gentlemen will regulate other more obvious cases.

I. No conversation should be indulged in during the play except such as is allowed by the laws of the game.

II. No player should in any manner whatsoever give any intimation as to the state of his hand or of the game, or of approval or disapproval of a play.

III. No player should lead until the preceding trick is turned and quitted.

IV. No player should, after having led a winning card, draw a card from his hand for another lead until his partner has played to the current trick.

V. No player should play a card in any manner so as to call particular attention to it, nor should he demand that the cards be placed in order to attract the attention of his partner.

VI. No player should purposely incur a penalty because he is willing to pay it, nor should he make a second revoke in order to conceal one previously made.

VII. No player should take advantage of information imparted by his partner through a breach of etiquette.

VIII. No player should object to referring a disputed question of fact to a bystander who professes himself uninterested in the result of the game and able to decide the question.

IX. Bystanders should not in any manner call attention to or give any intimation concerning the play or the state of the game, during the play of a hand. They should not look over the hand of a player without his permission; nor should they walk around the table to look at the different hands.

APPENDIX A.

ACE LED, FOLLOWED BY LOW CARD.

It has been pointed out that the precise information afforded by the lead of the original fourth-best—after the lead of the ace—may enable the second hand to finesse with safety against the leader. It is unquestionably true that the leader, endeavoring to exhibit the precise value of his intermediate cards, may assist the second hand in his play. On the other hand, it is admitted that the second lead of the original fourth-best will very often afford valuable information to the leader's partner; that the second lead of the original fifth-best, or any lower card, will withhold. The point to be determined is this: Do the many advantages claimed for the original fourth-best, after ace, outweigh the loss resulting from the adverse finessing of the second hand?

It appears clear to the author that the balance of advantage is overwhelmingly in favor of the lead of the original fourth-best, after ace, as against the second lead of the original fifth-best, or any lower card. It is the purpose of this Appendix to present to the student of the game an extended analysis of the subject.

NUMBER OF COMBINATIONS.

There are 882 possible combinations of five, six and seven cards from which the ace, then low—a card smaller than the 9—may be led; 280 combinations of five cards; 336 combinations of six cards, and 266 combinations of seven cards. In this computation the king is barred, as well as the combinations of ace, qu, kn, etc., and ace, kn, 10, 9, etc., as the second leads from these combinations are not disputed. The combination —ace, qu, 10, 9, etc, is not included, as it is reserved for a separate examination.

In 446 of the 882 combinations the original fourth-best is in sequence with the fifth-best, hence, the proposed second lead of "the fourth-best of the cards remaining in hand" after the original lead of the ace, is no improvement on the lead of the original fourth-best.

In 154 of the remaining 436 combinations, the leader has no court card with the ace, and second hand, in order to have a sure finesse (bar a court card falling from the fourth hand the first round), must hold the three court cards—k, qu, kn—and at least two other cards, one of which must be higher in rank than the leader's original fourth-best. When such an unusual distribution of strength does occur, the leader is not likely to profit by the lead of the fourth-best of those remaining as against the original fourth-best, for the second hand is strong enough to defer the finesse to a subsequent round of the suit. The chances against the second hand, in such combinations, having a sure finesse the second round of the suit, is about *160 to 1.* (See Table of Probabilities, p. 596.)

In 118 of the remaining 282 combinations, the fourth-best is a card in rank below the 7. When the original fourth-best is a card like the 6, 5 or smaller card, the chances against the second hand being strong enough to have a sure finesse the second round are very great. For example, if A holds ace, qu, 10, 5, etc., the chances against C holding k, kn, 9, 8, 7, 6, with or without others, is about 1900 to 1. The probability of loss in such combinations, due to adverse finessing, is so very inconsiderable that it has practically no weight whatever. This leaves but 164 combinations out of the possible 882, wherein the second hand is at all likely to have a finesse against the leader's second lead of the fourth-best.

When the leader holds six, seven, or more cards of the suit from which the lead of ace, then low, may be made, it will be admitted that the chances in favor of the second hand holding three, four, five or more cards of the suit are not so great as when the leader holds but five cards of the suit. If analysis shows that it is advantageous to follow the maxim when the leader holds exactly five cards of the suit, it follows that it is

more advantageous to adhere to the maxim when more than five are held. For this reason the combinations of exactly five cards are selected for extended examination.

COMBINATIONS OF FIVE CARDS.

For convenience, the combinations of five cards, 280 in number, may be divided as follows:—

1.—In 110 the fourth-best and fifth-best are in sequence.

2.—In 70 of the 170 remaining, there is no court card with the ace.

3.—In 56 of the 100 remaining, the fourth-best is a 6 or lower card.

4.—In 13 of the 44 remaining, second hand, if strong enough to have a sure finesse the second round, will usually be strong enough to defer the finesse to a subsequent round.

5.—The remaining 31 combinations are those in which the original fourth-best is the 8 or 7, and either the qu or kn is held in conjunction with the ace. These different classes of combinations will be examined separately and in order.

1.—It is found that in 110 of the possible 280 combinations of five cards, the fifth-best is in sequence with the fourth-best, and second hand has the finesse, if at all, equally against the one as the other, as:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 8, 7; C, k, kn, 9, 2; B, 6, 5; D, 4, 3.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 5; D plays 3.

2.—Whether A now leads the 8 as the original fourth-best, or the 7 as the fourth-best of those remaining, C will finesse the 9.

2.—In 70 of the remaining 170 combinations the ace is the only court card, and it is practically impossible for the second hand to gain by finesse against the leader. For example:—

A, ace, 10, 9, 8, 6; C, k, qu, kn, 7, 2; B, 4, 2; D, 5.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 3; D plays 5.

2.—A leads 8, and C, of course, has no finesse. But if A leads the fourth-best of those remaining. C has a sure finesse,

Here the original fourth-best is a *protection against finessing*. Again :—

A, ace, 10, 8, 7, 5 ; C, k, qu, kn, 9, 2 ; B, 6, 4 ; D, 3.

1.—A leads ace ; C plays 2 ; B plays 4 ; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 7 ; C plays 9 ; B plays 6 ; D renounces.

C finesses the 9. Had A lead the 5, C must have played the kn. But note that C can take the finesse in the third round, as :—

2.—A leads 5 ; C plays kn ; B plays 6 ; D renounces.

3 (A to lead).—A leads 7 ; C plays 9 ; etc, A cannot gain, in this combination, by the second lead of the fifth-best, unless C is forced to lead the suit *twice*. Note, also, how very exceptional is the distribution. By reference to the Table of Probabilities, page 596, it will be found that if A holds ace, 10, 8, 7, and one small card, the probability that C will hold k, qu, kn, 9, and one or more small, is about 1 in 161. On the other hand, if A, with this same holding, finds a more equal distribution of strength in the suit, say a court-card with each of the other players, then the second lead of the fifth-best may withhold valuable information from B, as :—

A, ace, 10, 8, 7, 5 ; C, kn, 2 ; B, qu, 9, 4 ; D, k, 6, 3.

1.—A leads ace ; C plays 2 ; B plays 4 ; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 7 ; C plays kn ; B plays qu ; D plays k.

B reads that the 10, 8 are with A. If A follows with the 5—although almost in sequence with the original fourth-best—B cannot read that A's suit is established, as the 10 could be with D. Of this class of combinations, the one *most favorable* for adverse finessing has been selected, for, as presently shown, if the fourth-best card is of *lower* rank, then the chances against the second hand having a sure finesse in the second round, are much greater. It should also be noted that a particular case has not been selected to show that the lead of the fourth-best of those remaining may withhold valuable information.

In nearly all of these 70 combinations—*one-fourth* of all the possible combinations of five cards—the lead of the fourth-best of those remaining may withhold valuable information that the

lead of the original fourth-best may publish. Against this admitted advantage stand the rare cases where the second hand may profit by finesse, but the chances against this are so great —about 160 to 1—that the probable loss from adverse finessing is so very small that it is hardly worth taking into consideration.

3.—In 56 of the remaining 100 combinations, the original fourth-best is a card in rank below the 7, and the second hand has practically no finesse. For example:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 5, 3; C, k, kn, 9, 8, 7; B, 6, 4; D, 2.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 7; B plays 4; D plays 2.

2.—A leads 5—and C has not a sure finesse, even with this unusual holding. C must have the 6 also, or one of these cards—kn, 9, 8, 7, 6—must fall the first round. Note that if *two* of these *five* cards fall the first round—bar calling—C, if he has the finesse against the fourth-best, will have it equally against the fourth-best of those remaining. When A holds ace, qu, 10, 5, etc., the probability of C holding k, 9, 8, 7, 6, is about 1 in 1901. If the lead is from an ace, then 6, combination, the chances against the second hand holding k, kn, 9, 8, 7, with or without others, is 446 to 1. The probability of loss, due to adverse finessing of the second hand, in all of these 56 combinations, is so exceedingly remote that it has practically no weight, On the other hand, however, if the suit is more equally distributed, the lead of the fifth-best from this same holding may withhold valuable information from B. Suppose:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 5, 3; C, 9, 8; B, kn, 7, 6; D, k, 4, 2.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 6; D plays 2.

2.—A leads 5; C plays 9; B plays kn; D plays k.

B can read that A has the qu, 10, and knows the suit is established. If A leads (trick 2) the 3, then the qu might be with C.

4.—In 13 of the remaining 44 combinations, if the second hand is strong enough to finesse the second round against the original fourth-best, he is usually strong enough to defer the finesse to the third round. To illustrate one:—

A, ace, kn, 8, 7, 2; C, k, qu, 10, 9; B, 4, 3; D, 6, 5.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 9; B plays 3; D plays 5.

2.—A leads 2; C plays qu; B plays 4; D plays 6.

If A (trick 2) leads the 7, C finesses the 10.

3 (A to lead).—A leads 7, C plays 10, etc. C takes the finesse in the third round. The advantage to A in this combination, if the second lead is the fourth-best of those remaining, is only possible when C is forced to lead the suit in the third round. It will be seen how remote the possibility of loss is here. It is about 114 to 1 against C holding k, qu, 10, 9, with or without others, A holding the above combination, and when held by C, the lead of the fifth-best will rarely save a trick, as against the lead of the fourth-best. Here, as in the other cases, it is well to remember that A, with the same holding, may ruin a great game by leading the fifth-best; if he finds the suit more evenly distributed, as:

A, ace, kn, 8, 7, 2; C, qu, 5; B, k, 10, 9; D, 6, 4, 3.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 5; B plays 9; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 7; C plays qu; C plays k; D plays 4,

B reads that the suit is established, and, being in the lead, may lead trumps from moderate strength, and a great game may result. If A leads (trick 2) the deuce, B cannot read A with command, and this might deter B from leading trumps, to the loss of several tricks.

This leaves but 31 combinations out of the 280—about 11 per cent. of the whole number—wherein it is at all likely that the second hand will be directed to a sure finesse. In each the fourth-best is either the 8 or 7.

When the original fourth-best is led, after the ace, from any of these combinations, the chances are greatly against the second hand having a sure finesse the second round. This is especially the case when the second lead is a 7. If A, for instance, leads ace, then 7, from ace, kn, 10, 7, etc., the probability that C will hold k, qu, 9, 8, with or without others, is about 1 in 115, or 114 to 1 against—very long odds. This feature—adverse finessing by the second hand—has been greatly exaggerated, and has been represented as being of much more

importance than is justified by analysis. If, for example, A, B, in a series of games, should *always* lead, as their original leads, from an ace, then 7, combination, they would, in the long run, find the second hand with the sure finesse in the second round, about *once in five matches of 48 deals each.* Here, as in previous statements concerning the probability of the second hand having a sure finesse the second round, the probability of a higher card than the original fourth-best of the leader falling the first round, from the third or fourth hands, has not been considered. When the card selected for the second lead is the 6 or smaller card, the probability against adverse finessing is so great that this feature was not considered of sufficient importance to merit consideration.

There are 18 possible combinations of five cards, from which the ace, then 8 may be led. When the leader follows the lead of the ace with the 8—as a fourth-best card, the probability that he will find the second hand with a sure finesse, the second round, is about 1 in 32. That is to say, in the long run, the lead of the 8, after ace, will afford the leader's partner information that may be turned to good account 31 times out of every 32 leads, without the probable contingent of loss. It must not be forgotten that the higher the rank of the fourth-best card after the ace, the greater the probability that partner can read the leader's holding in the suit. The writer believes that this feature—determination of command of the suit after the second round—is of much greater value to the leader's partner than is usually supposed. The student may be surprised to find how frequently the second lead of the 8 or 7, after the ace, will enable partner to read the command with leader, and how rarely—in comparison—the fourth-best of those remaining will do so.

HIGH CARD FALLING THE FIRST ROUND.

In computing the probability of the second hand holding certain combinations that would enable him to finesse with safety the second round of the suit, no account was taken of the probability that a card higher than the leader's second lead

of the original fourth-best might fall the first round. It was pointed out that when the leads of ace, then low, were made from ace, then 6, or lower combinations, the chances against the second hand having a sure finesse the second round were so very great, that this feature—high card falling to first round—was not considered of sufficient importance to merit attention.

When the leads are from ace, then 8, or ace, then 7, combinations, this feature plays a much more important part. Suppose for example, A leads from :—

1.—Ace, kn, 10, 8, 6. (5 possible combinations.)

1.—A leads ace; C plays 4;—k or qu falls from either B or D.

2.—A leads 10. A must, of course, depart from the usual continuation, and lead the 10, thus preventing the possibility of the 9 winning until the fourth round, if held adversely.

If the 9 should fall the first round, from either B or D, in this combination, C can have no finesse the second round, unless A's second lead is the fourth-best of those remaining, as :—

A, ace, kn, 10, 8, 6; C, k, qu, 7, 4; B, 5, 3, 2; D, 9.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 4; B plays 2; D plays 9.

2.—A leads 6; C plays 7. Here the lead of the fifth-best *directs* and *permits* C to finesse. Again, if A holds :—

2.—Ace, qu, 10, 8, 6. (5 possible combinations.)

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; k or kn falls from either B or D.

2.—A must lead qu, if the k fell; the 10, if the kn fell.

Or this—supposing the 9 falls the first round :—

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 4; D plays 9.

2.—A knows, the 9 falling from D, that, if he continues with the 8, he will direct C to finesse the kn if k, kn are both with C. If the k falls, A continues with the qu; if the kn, A goes on with the 10. The 9 falling, A is certainly justified, if he deems it advisable, in continuing with the 6. As a matter of fact it will not, in the majority of cases, deter C from taking the finesse. This is an important point. The student is reminded that when second hand has a sure finesse against the fourth-best, he has the *option* of the finesse no matter which card

follows the ace. Here is a case in point. Suppose that A leads ace, then 6, from ace, qu, 10, 8, 6; C holding k, kn, and others, will nearly always take the finesse, and is justified in doing so. C can read that A's second lead is from one of the following four combinations: Qu, 10, 8, 6; qu, 10, 7, 6; qu, 8, 7, 6; 10, 8, 7, 6. C knows that in *three* cases out of *four* his finesse will win. In the fourth event it is an even thing that the qu is with D. If with B, then, bar calling, D will trump.

Once more:—

3.—Ace, qu, 9, 8, 6. (5 combinations.)

If the k falls to ace, A, if he continues the suit, goes on with the qu. If the kn falls from either B or D; or the 10 from either C, B or D, A may depart from rule, leading the lowest.

These are all the situations in the ace, then 8, combinations, wherein a high card falling may affect the play, and they do not disturb the computations of probabilities referred to. Very similar argument applies to the ace, then 7, combinations, when a card of higher rank than the 7 falls in the first round. Those who advocate the lead of the "fourth-best of the cards remaining in hand," must depart from this rule—in certain situations—leading the original fourth-best, as a protection against adverse finessing, or leaving a small card win adversely; and likewise those who follow the rule of leading the original fourth-best—after the ace—may depart from rule to avoid adverse finessing, when a high card falls the first round. For example:—

A, ace, kn, 10, 8, 4; C, 9; B, 6, 5, 3; D, k, qu, 7, 2.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 9; B plays 3; D plays 2.

2.—A leads 8; A must lead the fourth-best here. It is a protection against the possibility of leaving the 7 win.

UNBLOCKING.

The question of unblocking, as well as the advantages of exhibiting command and protection, is worth some consideration. For example:—

A, ace, kn, 10, 7, 5; C, k, 8; B, qu, 9, 3; D, 6, 4, 2.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 3; D plays 2.

2.—A leads 7; C plays k; B plays qu; D plays 4.

If A follows the ace with the 5, the fourth-best of those remaining, then B cannot read that the lead is not from ace, 10, 7, 6, 5 and he must retain the qu, thus blocking the suit.

Again:—A, ace, kn, 9, 8, 2; C, k, 7, 6, 5; B, qu, 4, 3; D, 10.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 5; B plays 3; D plays 10.

2.—A leads 8; C plays k; B plays qu; D discards.

B unblocks, and A reads that B has the 4. If A leads (trick 2) the deuce, B must play 4, as the kn, 9 could both be with C. If the fourth-best of those remaining is led, the suit is not only blocked, but the exhibition of command is withheld from B.

A table showing the probability of the second hand holding certain combinations against the leader, now follows:

TABLE OF PROBABILITIES.*

LEADER HOLDS	THAT SECOND HAND HOLDS	IS ABOUT
1.—Ace, qu, 10, 5, and one or more lower..	K, kn, 9, 8, 7, 6, with or without others.....	1 in 1901
2.—Ace, qu, 10, 6, and one or more lower..	K, kn, 9, 8, 7, with or without others.....	1 in 447
3.—Ace, qu, 10, 7, and one or more lower..	K, kn, 9, 8, with or without others.....	1 in 115
4.—Ace, qu, 10, 8, and one or more lower..	K, kn, 9, with or without others.....	1 in 32
5.—Ace, qu, 10, 8, and exactly one lower..	K, kn, 9, and any one or more.....	1 in 39
6.—Ace, qu, 10, 8, and exactly two lower..	K, kn, 9, and any one or more.....	1 in 43
7.—Ace, qu, 10, 8, and exactly three lower.	K, kn, 9, and any one or more.....	1 in 50
8.—Ace, qu, 10, 8, and exactly one lower..	K, kn, 9, exactly.....	1 in 183

* The author is indebted to Mr. Edwin C. Howell, of the American Whist Club, Boston, for the computations in this table.

It will be evident from an examination of this table how very great are the chances against the second hand holding such cards as will insure a sure finesse against the second lead of the original fourth-best,

ACE, QUEEN, 10, 9 COMBINATION.

This is the combination most frequently cited by those who do not look with favor upon the second maxim of American Leads, as best illustrating the disadvantages attending this mode of opening a strong suit.

In the opinion of the author, arrived at after the most careful and unbiased examination, this combination is the least vulnerable of any, and offers the strongest arguments in favor of the second lead of the original fourth-best. Here the many advantages of exhibiting command, protection, unblocking and the prohibiting of adverse finessing, weigh immensely more in favor of the maxim; and it is here that the rare disadvantages have the least weight.

Before considering the probability of adverse finessing, the various phases favorable to this mode of opening this combination will be examined.

PROTECTION.

This feature is very important. The second lead of the 9 from this combination is a card of protection. If a lower card than the 9 is led it may be won adversely by the 8 or 7. For instance:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 9, 7; C, 8, 2; B, 6, 5; D, k, kn, 4, 3.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 5; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 7; C plays 8; B plays 6; D plays 4.

D is left with the perfect tenace over A. This would not have been the case had A continued with the 9. Or this:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 9, 7; C, 4, 2; B, 6, 5; D, k, kn, 8, 3.

If A follows the ace with 7, the fourth-best of those remaining, D wins with the 8, and remains with the tenace over A.

PROHIBITING ADVERSE FINESSING.

The second lead of the 9, from this combination, may serve as a protection against adverse finessing. As:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 9, 7; C, k, kn, 8, 2; B, 6, 5; D, 4, 3.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 5; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 7—and C finesses the 8. Here the lead of the fourth-best of those remaining, permits and directs C to finesse the 8, to A's manifest disadvantage.

Once more:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 9, 6; C, k, kn, 7, 3; B, 5, 4, 2; D, 8.

If A leads ace, then 6, C finesses the 7. If A follows with the 9, C must play the kn.

It is the author's opinion that this *single* feature—protection—presents advantages which more than offset the disadvantages from adverse finessing. It is well to remember that there is only *one* adverse distribution—k, kn, and one or more small cards with second hand. It is probably true that this *one* adverse distribution will occur more frequently than the *four* positions illustrated above; but it must not be forgotten that the proposed innovation—as far as this combination is concerned—by no means prohibits the second hand from taking the finesse. Second hand has the *option* of the finesse no matter which card follows the ace.

EXHIBITING COMMAND.

The value of exhibiting command merits great consideration in this combination. All adherents of the modern game, all players of experience admit, that, in the long run, it is very advantageous to give information of strength, and a suit of ace, qu, 10, 9, etc., is admittedly a strong suit.

The student may be surprised to find upon analysis, how rarely—in comparison with the second lead of the original fourth-best—B can read A with command, after the second round, if A follows the ace with the fourth-best of those remaining in hand.

There are six possible combinations of five cards, that is, ace, qu, 10, 9—and one of these six cards 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, and 2. The combination—ace, qu, 10, 9, 8—is not to be considered in this connection, for if the 8 is led as the fourth-best of those in hand it will convey the same information as will the second lead of the 9 as the original fourth-best. If the 9 is not led after ace, then the second lead must be one of these six cards —7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2. It is quite clear, in the long run, that the leader's fourth-best of those remaining will be the deuce as often as the 7; the trey as often as the 6, etc. The 4, 3 and 2 will be led as often as the 7, 6 and 5. Suppose, for example, that B has k, kn, 8, A leading the ace, then 9, then B, of course, can read after the second round, the exact combination A has led from, no matter how the cards fall. It is also clear that B has the three cards most likely to enable him to read A's holding—when a smaller card than the 9 is selected for the second lead. If the 4, 3 or 2 is led, after the ace, it will be found impossible to so arrange the cards (bar the possibility of C or D calling when the four is led), that the fall will enable B to place the command with A, even although B holds the k, kn, 8. If A's second lead is the 5, then B can read A with command only when the 7, 6 are both in one hand and fall in the two rounds. If the 6, then the 7 must be only singly guarded with C or D. In *three* cases out of *six*, it is impossible for B to read A with command, after the second round, if the second lead is the fifth-best. In the two other cases the chances are against the probability of A exhibiting command. The least examination will satisfy any one how rarely, in comparison with the second lead of the 9, will the fourth-best of those remaining exhibit command, no matter how the remaining eight cards are placed with C, B and D. Suppose this distribution:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 9, 6; C, 8, 5, 3; B, kn, 4, 2; D, k, 7.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 3; B plays 2; D plays 7.

2.—A leads 6; C plays 5; B plays kn; D plays k.

B cannot read from the fall that the qu is not with C. A's fifth-best, in this illustration, is a card in rank above the average that will be led—if not the 9—and yet, although B has

a court-card, and a card higher than A's second lead falls, the exhibition of command is withheld. Arrange the eight cards held by C, B and D in the above, as you may, and it will be found that the chances are very much against the probability of B reading the command with A, after the second round.

Every student, every practical whist player, will appreciate the great advantage due to exhibiting command, the second lead of the fourth-best—from this combination—has over the fourth-best of those remaining. To deny this is to admit that the theory of modern play is unsound, and that the better method is to play at random.

UNBLOCKING.

In certain distributions of the cards, B may be enabled to unblock in the second round, if the 9 follows the ace, when he could not do so if the fourth-best of those remaining is led. For instance:—

A, Ace, qu, 10, 9, 4; C, 8; B, k, kn, 2; D, 7, 6, 5, 3.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 8; B plays 2; D plays 3.

2.—A leads 9; C trumps; B plays k; D plays 5.

B unblocks. If A leads (trick 2) the 4, B must play kn, as the qu could be with D.

Or this:—

A, ace, qu, 10, 9, 7; C, kn; B, k, 3, 2; D, 8, 6, 5, 4.

1.—A leads ace; C plays kn; B plays 2; D plays 4,

2—A leads 9; C trumps; B plays k; D plays 5.

B plays the k, not only to unblock, but to show A that the k is not with D. Besides, A, in this instance, reads that B has the trey. If A's second lead is the 7, then B must play the 3—blocking the suit—and A is in the dark as to the location of the k. Neither A nor B can read that their suit is established after the second round, if the 7 follows the ace. The unblocking is much more likely to come off when A leads from 6 or more cards in suit.

ADVERSE FINESSING.

Those who object to the lead of the 9, after ace, do so upon the ground that it directs the second hand to finesse the kn—holding k, kn, etc. The purpose of the proposed innovation—the second lead of the fourth-best of those remaining—is to deter the second hand from making the finesse. It is true, of course, that second hand has a *sure* finesse—holding k, kn, etc.—the 9 led; but it is also true that if second hand knows the leader's second lead is the original fifth-best, he also knows that if he finesses the kn, the second round, the probabilities are in favor of the finesse winning. The point is this: will not the second hand, holding k, kn, etc., nearly always finesse the kn, when the second lead is the fourth-best of those remaining? This is a great factor in this combination. A factor, the weight of which must have been entirely overlooked by those who bring this combination forward as the chief argument against the soundness of the second maxim of American Leads.

It will be found upon analysis that if the fifth-best is led, after ace, from five cards in suit, C holding k, kn, and one small, the finesse of the kn by C will win in some instances, as often as 7 to 1, in others 4 to 1, and in no possible distribution of the cards will the finesse lose oftener than once in four times. If all the possible variations are tabulated, A holding five cards, C holding either k, kn, and one; k, kn, and two; or k, kn, and three small, as well as those when A holds six cards in suit, it will be found that, taken as a whole, the finesse of the kn will win four times out of five cases, or about 4 to 1 in favor of the finesse. This computation is based upon the theory that the smallest possible small cards will fall to the ace; but in actual play, small cards like the 7, 6, or 5, will often fall to the ace, and when they do, this often increases the chances of the finesse winning.

It is admitted, of course, when A's second lead is the 9, after ace, C's finesse cannot lose at all, and that when A's second lead is the deuce, or other small card, C's finesse is speculative

and may result in loss; but is it not clear that the probabilities favor the finesse? This being the case, will not the second hand, holding k, kn, etc., *very* often finesse the kn, when the leader follows the ace with the fourth best of those remaining? Is it not obvious that the *option* of the finesse still left open to the second hand, must in a great measure vitiate the only object any one can have in advocating the proposed innovation—at least as far as this adverse holding by the second hand is concerned?

Consider the advantages! Exhibiting command, protection, unblocking and protection against adverse finessing. Then reflect that against all this stands only the one adverse case—k, kn, and one or small in the second hand. Further consider that when this single adverse distribution does occur—which is comparatively rare—the lead of the fourth-best of those remaining will not, in perhaps more than half the cases, prevent the adverse play.

The author approached the subject without bias, pursued the investigation without prejudice, and, after the most careful examination, is convinced that the advantages attending the practical application of the second maxim of American Leads are overwhelming as compared with the disadvantages.

THE LEAD OF THE TEN FROM QUEEN, KNAVE, 10, ETC.

IN the third issue of *Whist*, August, 1891, p. 37, the author, over the pseudonym of "W. H. O.," gave a table of high card leads in which the lead of the 10 from qu, kn, 10, etc., was recommended. Therein was stated:—

"Her majesty to announce invariably *five* or more in suit, and that ace and king, or king is in hand; the knave denied. The queen followed by ace to show five; by king, six or more." And also:—"Queen, knave, 10—and any one or more (even if the 9 is in hand)—lead the 10."

Accepting, at that time, the lead of the 10 from k, kn, 10 etc., as the best lead from that combination—supported as it was by the practice of several generations of whist players—the writer was soon afterwards convinced that—if the 10 was led from both combinations—the dual significance of the lead of the 10, and the loss resulting from the attendant complication, more than offset the advantages derived from the increased strength added to the queen lead, and abandoned the idea of advocating, in "Modern Scientific Whist," the lead of the 10, from qu, kn, 10, etc.

A recent examination of the k, kn, 10 combination convinces the writer that the fourth-best, and not the 10, should be led from this holding. If the lead of the 10, from this combination is abandoned, it is then self-evident to all whist players that the system of American Leads will be improved by adopting the lead of the 10 from qu, kn, 10, etc., as this eliminates all uncertainty, and renders all the high card leads free, practically, from duality of inference.

THE LEAD OF THE TEN FROM KING, KNAVE, 10, ETC.

The motive, originally, for adopting the lead of the 10 from k, kn, 10, etc., was, no doubt, supposed to be two-fold. (1) A card of protection, to force the play of a court card, and thus early in the play leave the command with the leader. (2) The information the lead of the 10 conveys to third hand. There does not appear to be any other argument in favor of the present 10 lead.

It is unquestionably the experience of the most scientific whist players of the present day, that the informatory character of the lead of the 10 from k, kn, 10, etc., is, in the long run, disadvantageous to those publishing the information. This in no measure tends to support the theory that information published must be disadvantageous because there are *two* adversaries and only *one* partner. It has always been recognized that it is usually detrimental to announce weakness, or herald an exact holding of certain cards that may be finessed against. On the score of information it does seem that the argument—as well as practical experience—favors the rejection rather than the retention of this lead.

This time-honored lead of the 10 from k, kn, 10, etc., must stand upon the ground that it is intrinsically sound; that no other lead from this combination will yield, in the long run, so many tricks.

In determining this point there are two phases of the question to be carefully considered.

1.—The trick-making value of the lead of the 10 as a card of protection, to force the play of a high card, held adversely.

2.—The trick-losing phases of the lead when third hand covers with ace or queen, thus sacrificing the 10, and when the second hand is directed to play advantageously.

I. AS A CARD OF PROTECTION.

Here are the situations—and there are other variations of these not given—favorable to the lead of the 10, and from

which the fourth-best will lose a trick, as against the lead of the 10.

A'S CARDS.	C'S CARDS.	B'S CARDS.	D'S CARDS.
K, kn, 10, 7	9, 8	6, 5, 4, 2	Ace, qu, 2
K, kn, 10, 7	4, 3 2	8, 6, 5	Ace, qu, 9
K, kn, 10, 7	Ace, qu, 3	8, 6, 4, 2	9, 5
K, kn, 10, 7	Ace, qu, 9	8, 5, 4	6, 3, 2
K, kn, 10, 6, 4	Ace, qu, 9, 3, 2	7	8, 5

In each of the above distributions the lead of the 10 serves as a card of protection, and either wins the trick or forces the play of ace or queen. If A leads the fourth-best, either C or D wins the first round with the 9 or lower card.

The distinguishing characteristic of all dispositions of the suit, when loss results from the lead of the fourth-best, is that third hand had not the 9 or higher card. But it is well to here note the fact that the lead of the fourth-best does not *always* lose a trick, when the cards third hand holds are all smaller than the 9. On the contrary the lead of the 10 will sometimes lose a trick in such situation. This will be illustrated presently. On these, and immaterial variations of these situations, must rest the argument in favor of the lead of the 10 from this combination.

2. THE SACRIFICE OF THE TEN.

On page 606 are tabulated some of the situations unfavorable to the lead of the 10, resulting from the sacrifice of the 10, thus wasting the strength necessary to ultimately establish the suit.

The lead of the 10, in any of these combinations, loses a trick, and in some cases two tricks, as against the lead of the fourth-best. In Nos. 1 and 7, the loss results from B playing qu on 10 led, for the purpose of gaining the lead. When the 10 is led, and third hand holds ace, qu, and small, or queen and two or three small, and a good trump hand, he certainly is justified in making an effort to gain the lead, and the lead of

the 10, in such situations, may lose a trick. In the case of third hand holding ace, qu and one small, the play of small, leaves

	A'S CARDS.	C'S CARDS.	B'S CARDS.	D'S CARDS.
1	K, kn, 10, 8, 7	9, 6, 5, 4, 2	Ace, qu, 3	
2	K, kn, 10 8, 7	9, 6, 5, 4, 2	Ace, qu	3
3	K, kn, 10, 8	Qu, 9, 4, 2	Ace, 7, 6, 5	3
4	K, kn, 10, 5	8, 4, 3, 2	Ace, 9, 5	Qu, 6
5	K, kn, 10, 7, 6	8, 4, 3, 2	Ace, 9	Qu, 5
6	K, kn, 10, 8, 7, 6	4, 3	Ace	Qu, 9, 5, 4
7	K, kn, 10, 5	7	Qu, 4, 3, 2	Ace, 9, 8, 6
8	K, kn, 10, 5	9, 4, 3, 2	Qu, 8, 7	Ace, 6
9	K, kn, 10, 4	9, 8, 5, 3	Qu, 2	Ace, 7, 6
10	K, kn, 10, 8, 3	9, 7, 6, 5, 4	Qu	Ace, 2
11	K, kn, 10, 2	Qu, 5	9, 8, 7, 6	Ace, 4, 3
12	K, kn, 10, 7	6, 4	9, 5, 2	Ace, qu, 8, 3
13	K, kn, 10, 2	Ace, qu, 3	9, 2	8, 7, 6, 5
14	K, kn, 10, 4, 3, 2	Qu, 5	9	Ace, 8, 7, 6
15	K, kn, 10, 2	Ace, qu, 9, 7	8, 5, 3	6, 4, 3
16	K, kn, 10, 8, 6	Qu, 9, 5, 4	7, 3, 2	Ace
17	K, kn, 10, 4	Ace, qu	6, 3, 2	9, 8, 7, 5
18	K, kn, 10, 6	Ace, 9, 8, 7	5, 4, 3, 2	Qu

the leader in doubt as to the location of these two cards. The probability of loss resulting from the lead of the 10 in such cases is, however, remote, and is not entitled to much consideration.

The great, innate weakness of the lead of the 10 from k, kn 10, etc., is found in all cases where the third hand holds the ace, and not the queen. This is a disposition of the suit of *very frequent* occurrence. And also when partner is weak in the suit. To illustrate a single distribution in each case:—Take No. 4:—

1.—A leads 10; C plays 2; B plays ace; D plays 6.

2.—B leads 9; D plays qu; A plays k; C plays 3.

Here, although B held ace, 9 and one small, the lead of the 10 loses a trick. And this No. 14:—

1.—A leads 10; C plays qu; B plays 9; D plays 6—and D must make the ace, 8, and C D have *three* tricks, and A has not

command until the third round. If A leads the fourth-best, he is at once with the command, and C D can take but the *single* trick. Note that in Nos. 15 to 18 inclusive, third hand holds, as his highest card, the 8, 7, 6 and 5 respectively, and yet in each case the lead of the 10, as a card of protection, loses a trick as against the fourth-best. An examination of the last tabulation will show that the distributions are not exceptional, and that most of them are average dispositions of a suit, and many of them more common than the combinations found in the first table.

It would seem as though a careful analysis of all the variations favorable and unfavorable to the lead of the 10 from k, kn, 10, etc., must convince any one that the lead of the 10 from this combination, even if considered independent of any other phase of the subject, is not as strong as the fourth-best card. But it must not be forgotten that there is another very strong argument—and one that must have great weight—in favor of the lead of the fourth-best from this holding: If this lead is dropped from the list of high-card leads, it makes room for the lead of the 10 from qu, kn, 10, etc., which will herald a combination of high cards against which there is no finesse, and, at the same time, remove the ambiguity that now attaches to the lead of the queen.

If the change here proposed, is adopted, the lead of the 10 followed by qu will show kn and one small, if followed by kn, the qu and at least two small. The lead of the queen will then announce invariably *five* or more in suit, and deny the kn. Followed by ace shows five in suit, exactly; by king, six or more. The change will simplify rather than complicate the play of third hand. The present detail of the play of third hand when the 10 is led from k, kn, 10, etc., will, of course, be removed. Third hand will then play to the 10 led, practically the same as instructed to play to qu led, from the same combination, the chief point of difference being that third hand is sure, at *once*, of the combination from which the lead is made. The change will necessitate another lead of the 9, viz., from k, kn, 10, 9—with or without others. There can be no objec-

tion to this lead, *per se*, for the combination is a strong one, but it does, unfortunately, give a triple significance to the lead of the 9. The nature of this combination, however, is such that in the great majority of cases, third hand will be able to read the play at once, and nearly always after the first round. The play of third hand, the 9 led, *see* p. 212, will not be affected by this new lead of the 9. With ace, qu, etc., third hand play is the same as when he holds k, qu, etc.,—9 led. With qu, etc., or with four small cards, third hand plays as he is instructed to do when the 9 is led from ace, qu, 10, 9, or ace, kn, 10, 9, (*see* p. 212).

After a very careful examination of this subject, taking into consideration all the different phases—many of which are not even referred to—the author feels justified in recommending the adoption of the following changes in the high card leads:—

1.—From—Qu, kn, 10, etc., lead 10; follow with qu to show four; with kn to show five or more.

2.—From—K, kn, 10, 9, with or without others, lead 9. If the 9 forces the qu or ace, qu, follow with the k to show four; with the kn, to show five; and with the 10 to show six or more in suit.

3.—From—K, kn, 10, etc., lead fourth-best.

THE THREE-TRUMP ECHO.

In March *Whist*, 1895, Mr. H. E. Green suggested an innovation in trump echoing. To an honor led it was proposed to "echo from *three*, play the lowest from one or two, and *hold* the lowest from *four* until the third round." Mr. Fisher Ames at once suggested, as a probable improvement on Mr. Green's method, that the partner of the trump-leader—holding three or more trumps—might play his second-best trump to the first round, and his third-best to the second round. Work, in his "Whist of To-Day," extends the scope of this echo to cover all cases when third hand does not have to try to win the first round. For example:—A leads 4; C plays qu; B, holding kn, 10, 8, plays 10.

The proposed innovations, like most new plays that are from time to time suggested, work both ways—for harm and for good. Often they seem to be trick-winners—in theory—but prove to be trick-losers in practice. This idea, however, appears to have sufficient merit to justify whist players in closely examining it, and giving it a practical test.

The present method is to echo four or more, and, after declining to echo, sub-echo the original possession of three trumps. The trump echoes, as at present used, are made in the following ways:—

1.—In the direct play of trumps.

2.—In the play of a plain suit.

3.—In taking the force and then leading trumps.

4.—In answering the call.

5.—The sub-echo.

It would seem that the proposed "three-echo" has no bearing in situations 3 and 4, and that the present methods under these conditions are the best yet devised.

1. IN THE DIRECT PLAY OF TRUMPS.

The argument in favor of the Three-Trump Echo is, that it is more common for the partner of the trump-leader to hold three trumps or less than it is for him to hold four or more, and that by the proposed play three trumps or less can nearly always be shown—after the second round. And when four or more are held, it is claimed that the same order of play will usually proclaim them.

The application of the proposed echo, in the direct play of trumps, is only practical when the echoing player does not endeavor to win the first or second rounds.

A few examples are appended illustrating the practical application of the play:

A, ace, k, qu, 9, 8; C, 10, 4; B, kn, 7, 6, 5; D, 3, 2.

1.—A leads qu; C plays 4; B plays 7; D plays 2.

2.—A leads ace; C plays 10; B plays 6; D plays 3.

In all such situations the play proposed for B is not nearly so strong as the present method. A knows that B has kn, but the 5 may be with D. If B held originally, kn, 7, 6, then showing the kn, by the play of 7, then 6, would be of little value, for A would usually go on with the third round anyway. Suppose:—

A, ace, qu, kn, 8; C, k, 10, 2; B, 9, 7, 6, 3; D, 5, 4.

1.—A leads ace; C plays 2; B plays 7; D plays 4.

2.—A leads qu; C plays k; B plays 6; D plays 5.

The play works very disadvantageously for A B. The 10 or 9 is marked with B, but the 10 or 9 and the trey may be with C. In this, and similar situations, even although B's smallest trump may be a very small one—and no false-carding on the part of the opponents—A cannot read the play after the second round. Or this:—

A, ace, k, qu, 8, 5; C, kn, 10; B, 9, 7, 6, 2; D, 4, 3.

1.—A leads qu; C plays 10; B plays 7; D plays 3.

2.—A leads ace; C plays kn; B plays 6; D plays 4.

If this play is adopted the weapon of defense will be false-carding. This distribution is most favorable, and yet, unless

false cards are barred, D may have the deuce. The fact that false cards will be played, especially if this play is in vogue, will render the play ambiguous, and leave the leader in uncertainty and doubt. Besides, will not A in such situations—when B has only three trumps and does not echo—be strong enough to go on with the third round? The only advantage in the three card echo here, when B does have just three trumps, would be in enabling A to stop the trump lead, and give B the opportunity of making his third trump by ruffing, before A draws the remaining trump from the adversary. But this phase would be of infrequent occurrence. Another advantageous situation, but uncommon—leader six trumps, partner exactly three trumps, and each of the opponents two trumps, In the foregoing, A leads a high card that retains the lead, but if the echo is extended to cover all cases where the echoing hand does not try to win the first round, then any sacrifice made in echoing *may* result in loss. As:—

A, ace, 8, 7, 6, 4, 3; C, qu; B, kn, 10, 5; D, k, 9, 2.

1.—A leads 6; C plays qu; B plays 10; D plays 2.

C now opens a suit; B echoes, but the play must show only three or more—not four or more as now. B regains the lead, and—

2.—B leads 5; D plays 9; A plays ace; C renounces.

D's k is now good, and this would not have been the case had B played the 7 to first round. Or this:—

A, ace, k, 5, 4; C, kn; B, 10, 9, 7, 6; D, qu, 8, 3, 2.

1.—A leads 4; C plays kn; B plays 9; D plays 2.

B may now echo in the suit that C opens, but the play will only show *three* or more.

2.—A leads k; C renounces; B plays 7; D plays 3.

The play is unfortunate. A cannot read B's holding. He knows that B has the 10, D the qu, 8, but the 6 may also be with D, besides the play loses a trick, for whether A or B next lead the trumps, D must make the qu or 8. Had B used the present echo, he would now have in hand the 10 and 9, and if he leads through, D cannot make a trick. B, in situations like this, having echoed in the plain suit, might lead or play (trick

2), in the above illustration, the 10 to show *four*, the 7 to show *three*. But situations might come up when this second sacrifice would lose a trick.

WHEN THE ECHOING HAND HAS THREE TRUMPS.

It requires no argument to convince that the present method is very much stronger than the proposed play, when the echoing hand has four trumps. If there is merit in the play it must be found in positions where the third hand has three trumps or less. A few such will be examined. Suppose:—

A, k, qu, 10, 3, 2; C, ace; B, 9, 8, 6; D, kn, 7, 5, 4.

1.—A leads qu; C plays ace: B plays 8; D plays 4.

B is now almost as likely to next lead the trump as A, What is he to return? If the 9, no echo is developed. If he returns the lower of the two remaining, it will result in loss in certain situations. The sacrifice of the 8, in this situation loses a trick, if B next leads the suit. As:—

2.—B leads 6; D plays 7; A plays 10; C renounces.

3 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays kn; A plays k; C renounces.

D's 5 makes. This would not have been the case had B not sacrificed the 8 in echoing. Or this:—

A, k, qu, kn, 3, 2; C, ace; B, 9, 8, 6; D, 10, 7, 5, 4,

1.—A leads kn; C plays ace; B plays 8; D plays 4.

2 (B to lead).—B leads 6; D plays 7; A plays k; C renounces.

3 (B to lead).—B leads 9; D plays 10; A plays qu; C renounces.

The play by B may lose a trick. Again:—

A, ace, k, 5, 4, 3; C, kn; B, 10, 9, 7; D, qu, 8, 6, 2.

1.—A leads 4; C plays kn; B plays 9; D plays 2.

If B next leads—either the 10 or 7, D will cover, and must eventually make the 6, and a trick is lost. Here is another phase:—

A, qu, 6, 5, 4, 3; C, k; B, kn, 10, 7; D, ace, 9, 8, 2.

1,—A leads 4; C plays k; B plays 10; D plays 2.

C now leads a suit which both B and D can ruff, and no matter which card B ruffs with he is overtrumped, and D

must afterwards make the 8 or 9. If B does not sacrifice the 10 in echoing, this would not be the case.

It would seem that the proposed play—in the direct play of trumps—is disadvantageous when the echoing hand holds four trumps, and that when he holds exactly three, the sacrifice of a card like the 10, 9, or 8, *may* lose a trick in every case when the trump-leader has less than the four honors. The foregoing distribution, and there are many others, show the disadvantages of the three-echo. The following show situations favorable to the play:—

A, ace, k, qu, 5; C, 6, 3; B, kn, 10, 8; D, 9, 7, 4, 2.

1.—A leads k; C plays 3; B plays 10; D plays 2.

2.—A leads qu; C plays 6; B plays 8; D plays 4.

Here the echo is valuable. C knows that B has the kn, and if A continues he leads the 5, and the opponent cannot take a trump trick. Again:—

A, ace, k, qu, 5, 4; C, 8, 6; B, kn, 3, 2; D, 10, 9, 7.

Here, after two rounds, A knows to a certainty that B has exactly one more, and that the kn or 10 is with the adversaries. If B does not echo, the kn, 10, may both be with the opponents, possibly both in one hand. But it is well to note that while the information that B has either kn or 10 may be *comforting* to A, it will in situations such as this, rarely yield any substantial results, for A will usually go on and pick up the other trumps. Or this:—

A, ace, k, qu, 7, 5, 4; C, 9, 6, 3; B, 8, 2; D, kn, 10.

In this situation, after two rounds, A knows that B has no more, and that the nine must be with the adversaries. But note that if the 9 and 8 change places, then the present method would also show that B could have no more—after the second round.

2. IN THE PLAY OF A PLAIN SUIT.

A careful examination of this phase of the three-echo apparently demonstrates that it is a decided improvement on the present method. There seems to be hardly any disadvantages here, as compared with the echo in the trump suit, and this

form of the echo comes up much more frequently than one would suppose. Very often the first round of trumps is won by the adversaries, who then open their suit, and the partner of the trump-leader echoes—at present if he originally held four trumps, but as now suggested—if he has three or more. If the three-echo should be adopted in the plain-suit phase, and not in the direct play of trumps, then there could be no confusion.

The echo in suit would always mean three or more, a failure to echo less than three, and after the echo in plain suit —if more than three are held—a subsequent echo in trumps would signify it. Suppose as an illustration:—

A, ace, k, 6, 5, 4; C, qu, kn; B, 10, 9, 7; D, 8, 3, 2.

1.—A leads 5; C plays kn; B plays 7; D plays 2.

If B echoes with the 9—although the sacrifice is only a single pip—he loses a trick, if the qu is with D. C now opens his suit and if B can echo, he is then marked with at least two trumps remaining, and in the next round of trumps, B leads the 10, or plays the 9, and can have but one more. If B does not get the opportunity to echo, then, when he leads or plays the 9, A cannot read that he has one more trump. As the cards are distributed, the three-echo in the first round would enable A to read B with the 10, after the second round, and this might be of value to A, but in most situations it is more likely to be only a satisfaction—not a real benefit. Suppose B cannot echo and A gains the lead, thus:—

2.—A leads k; C plays qu; B plays 9; D plays 3.

A would now play, usually, just the same as though he knew B had the 10, for if B does not have the 10, the 10, 8 are with D, and one must make, and A will go on with the ace. Or if he has a losing card, that must lose unless B can ruff it, he will give B the chance, for if B does not have the trump, no harm is likely to follow. But suppose, in the last illustration, B has the three also, then:—

1.—A leads 5; C plays kn; B plays 7; D plays 2.

Here, again, if B three echoes with the 9, he loses a trick if the qu is with D, and A has led from ace, k, 6, 5. If B now

echoes in suit, it shows three or more, and in the next round of trumps the fall of the 3, from B, will show that he held four originally.

There is much to be said —pro and con—on the subject, and the foregoing examination is far from being complete. There are, unquestionably, marked advantages and disadvantages. Where does the balance lie? It seems almost impossible to answer the question by analysis alone. Nothing short of an extended practical test is likely to determine it.

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